The Policy and Procedures for Equality

Our school helps us to walk with Jesus to be the best that we can be. Through God's love and guidance, we create an ethos of shared endeavour, friendship and co-operation to help us flourish academically, emotionally and spiritually.

"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13

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Equality Statement

At Baxenden St John's School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

1. Introduction

a) Legislative context

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces previous policies relating to race, gender and disability equality. It has been designed to help the school meet the duty to:

a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

b) Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

c) Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

b) Protected characteristics

The Equality Act defines nine protected characteristics, of which the following are potentially applicable to the school community (pupils, staff and governors) are:

- Age (as an employer but not applicable to pupils)
- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

2. General principles

Staff and Governors will

- Actively promote equality of opportunity in all areas of school life.
- Ensure that members of the school community know their rights, and respect the rights of others.
- Aim to ensure that prejudice or discrimination in all its forms is actively rejected.
- Raise awareness of equality issues for all members of the school community, and through our links with the local community.
- Establish strategies to ensure equal access to the curriculum and enable each individual to fulfil his/her potential regardless of ability, gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation

3. Practice and policy

Equality and diversity principles based on the above aims will be embedded in our daily practices, policies and the processes of decision-making, including:

- Admissions, induction and attendance.
- Pupils' progress and achievement.

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing, particularly in relation to safeguarding.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the wider community.
- Behaviour management.
- Staff recruitment and professional development.
- Curriculum access and participation.
- Teaching styles and strategies.

4. Policy Commitments

a) Curriculum

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this we will ensure that:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and their families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- Attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language are promoted wherever possible;
- Images and materials used in the delivery of the curriculum positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

b) Progress and Achievement

There are consistently high expectations of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes:

- Staff will be expected to provide positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- The particular needs of individuals and groups within the school will be identified, and targeted interventions used to narrow gaps in achievement;
- A range of teaching methods will used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils;
- All pupils are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning;

c) School ethos and culture

- We aim to achieve an ethos of inclusion, openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school community and encourages mutual respect;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities (this not only includes physical access, but takes account wider access to school information and activities);
- Pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice through the School Council and arrange of other leadership opportunities;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included.

d) Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- Those involved in recruitment and selection are appropriately trained and aware of the need to avoid discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity;
- Equality policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review.

e) Countering and challenging harassment and bullying
The school:

- counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this stance is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice-related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents;
- reports to Governors and the Local Authority on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

f) Partnerships with parents and the wider community
The school aims to work in partnership with parents. We will:

- Encourage all parents to participate in the life of the school;
- Maintain good channels of communication, ensuring parents' views are captured to inform practice;
- Actively encourage Parents to provide support and engage in the various workshops in support of their children's learning.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- oversee the effective implementation of the policy;
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy;
- report to the Governing Body annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- keep up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Development Plan;
- support the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team in implementing the policy;
- evaluate and review the policy every two years and the equality objectives every 4 years.

Pupils will be:

- involved in the further development of the policy and objectives;
- encouraged to actively support the policy and expected to act in accordance with it.

Parents will be:

- encouraged to actively support the policy;
- informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

School staff will be:

- made fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them;
- involved in the further development of the policy and objectives;
- encouraged to actively support the policy and expected to act in accordance with it;
- encouraged to make known any queries or training requirements.

6. Equality Objectives

Taking into account the views of pupils, parents, staff and community together with analysis of available information, specific and measurable objectives will be set that will help the school to achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed every 4 years and reported to the Governing Body.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Pupils, Staff and the Governing Body. The policy will be reviewed every two years.