

SACRED HEART OF MARY GIRLS' SCHOOL



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Policy adopted	October 2013	
SLT Member Responsible	K. O'Neill	
To be reviewed	Every 2 years	
Date of last review	Autumn 2017	
Date of next review	Autumn 2019	
Headteacher		Date: September 2017
Chair of Governors		Date: September 2017

The legal and local framework for this policy is **The Equality Act 2010** which replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

“You are, all of you, sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. All baptised in Christ, you have clothed yourself in Christ and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Jesus Christ”

Galations 3: 26-29

The Sacred Heart of Mary Girls’ School, is a community of faith with Christ as its foundation. Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church provide us with our influence and inspiration and we believe that every person is a unique individual created in God’s image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem, respect and dignity regardless of difference.

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be active in promoting social and racial justice and harmony as this is fundamental to the common good. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At Sacred Heart of Mary Girls’ School we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of the life of our school community. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our responsibilities in promoting towards community cohesion.

Admissions

As a Catholic school, we acknowledge our right to give preference to practising Catholic pupils. However, Catholics of all racial groups have equal access to the school and criteria for the admission of non-Catholic pupils does not favour any one racial group over another

At the Sacred Heart of Mary Girls’ School, we are committed to the following guiding principles :

- All are of equal importance in the sight of God and should be equally afforded dignity and respect
- Diversity resulting from age, gender, racial and social origins, culture and practice should be regarded as enriching our Catholic community
- Every child is to be held in equal esteem as a child of God. Their individual needs are to be carefully assessed and monitored in the light of their talents,

- abilities and previous and present experience
- Every child should have access to full and appropriate educational and spiritual provision

Aims

1. To confirm the Christian message of equality of all in the sight of God
2. To acknowledge our obligation as Catholics to support those in the community who are the weakest and most in need
3. To prepare students for life in a diverse society in which our pupils are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
4. To provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
5. To develop the liturgical, academic and pastoral curriculum that promotes an appreciation of difference and actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
6. To ensure equality of esteem for all subject areas and courses of study
7. To create a school culture of understanding, tolerance, and respect whereby individuals are judged on their own merits
8. To ensure that the girls are given full access to all areas of the curriculum unimpeded by stereotyping
9. To give pupils with special educational needs the fullest possible access to learning opportunities consistent with their abilities
10. To follow procedures which detect and deal with any discriminatory behaviour which may take place within the community

To achieve these aims we will:

- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures
- publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning
- ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others:
- ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure equality of opportunity

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- ensure compliance with equality legislation;
- meet requirements to publish equality information and objectives;

- ensure that the college's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;
- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

The Head Teacher

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- provide regular information for staff and Governors about the policy and to provide relevant training if necessary;
- make sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out if necessary
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy;
- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- be vigilant for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

Community Cohesion

We are committed to supporting community cohesion by:

- developing a common vision and sense of belonging

- developing an appreciation of the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances
- creating opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential and building strong and positive relationships

We engage with the wider community in the following ways :

- Strong links with Brentwood Diocese Secondary Schools
- School to School Support Partnership with Champion School for Boys and 8 local feeder primary schools
- Membership of the Havering Learning Partnership
- Membership of the 'Empower Teaching Alliance' and the Agnus Dei' Teaching Alliance
- Teachers have links with other schools and promote good role models when interacting with staff from other schools, through a range of CPD activities, TeachMeets and Network Meetings
- Learners have a strong voice and opportunities to take responsibility through our Student Council and engage with local Debating competitions, DoE scheme, Maths and Science competitions and the Jack Petchey Award Scheme
- We engage parents through a range of activities, consultation evenings, Information Evenings on issues affecting young people and their families and the PTFA
- We have strong links with external agencies including social services, the EWO service, the health service and police
- Outreach work via family support team including preventative work and crisis intervention, home visits and needs-led support
- Relevant signposting to other agencies in the community
- Community use of the 'Old Chapel'

The Curriculum

The School Curriculum should ensure that what is taught conveys truths about the world from a global perspective.

Every Department must make sure that schemes of work and teaching materials do not promote negative attitudes towards anyone of a particular gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age.

Personal Development and Well-being

All pupils should:

- Have equal access to their teacher's time and attention
- Have equal access to resources
- Perceive themselves to be equally valued and as having equal access to all school activities
- Pupils should be encouraged to discuss their attitudes and opinions on topics of current concern within an informed, controlled and trusting environment.
- Individual support and guidance takes account of personal and cultural needs specific to particular groups
- The full range of post-school options is explored in careers education and all

- pupils are encouraged to consider all the options
- The school monitors pupil destinations and uses the data to evaluate Careers Educational Guidance and support given to pupils
- No pupils are placed with employers where discrimination is known to take place
- Extra-curricula activities are inclusive and attempt to deal with any social or cultural isolation that pupils from any group might feel
- Pupils who are pregnant will be given full access to curriculum support as appropriate
- Pupils undergoing gender reassignment will be given full pastoral support care will be taken to ensure the wishes of the individual pupil and their family are taken into account, with a view to supporting them during potential transition.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

- Procedures for managing behaviour and disciplining pupils are fair and applied equally to all pupils
- Rewards and sanctions are applied without prejudice

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Each student's progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status.

In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the college meets its duty to positively promote diversity. (e.g. lesson observations record evidence of differentiation and texts are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity.)

The data collected is used to inform further school planning, target-setting and decision-making.

Worship

When planning assemblies teachers should ensure that the content and language is inclusive and does not discriminate or exclude any members of an ethnic, religious, gender or ability group. Staff should aim to include contributions of all people to world development and reflect diversity within the School and the local community.

In all liturgical celebrations the entire school community should be involved and feel engaged.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- Recruitment and selection procedures are consistent with the Equality Act (2010)
- Members of the Governing Body are familiar with the code and are aware of the need to use the code to ensure good practice in recruitment, selection and promotion processes

- Any person recruited to the school will be made fully aware of the aims and objectives of the Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School and will be required to support the Catholic ethos of the school irrespective of their own religious, faith, or ethnic background
- All members of staff are given equal access to training and professional development opportunities

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY WILL BE SEEN AS A SERIOUS BREACH OF SCHOOL POLICY AND CONTRARY TO THE EQUALITY ACT (2010) AND WILL BE DEALT WITH BY THE HEAD TEACHER AS A SERIOUS MATTER.

Reviewed September 2017