

**St Louis Catholic Academy, Newmarket**  
**Part of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trust**

*Loving to Learn, Learning to Love*



## **Equality Policy**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Our school strives to be a living Christian Community which values and nurtures each individual through a sound education and encourages responsible attitudes towards our changing world.**

### **PURPOSE**

To outline the commitment of the staff and governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of opportunity and the diversity within the school community is celebrated and valued. We are a Catholic school, but of course, recognise and value people of all religious backgrounds, both adults and children.

## **Introduction**

The Equality Act (2010) recognises nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity (hereafter referred to as the protected characteristics). The Equality Act (2010) also identifies seven types of discrimination: direct discrimination; associative discrimination; discrimination by perception; indirect discrimination; harassment; harassment by a third party and victimisation.

## **Statement/Principles**

Human dignity is something which cannot be taken away. Catholic Social Teaching states that every person has value, is worthy of great respect and must be free from slavery, manipulation and exploitation.

“Catholic social teaching believes that human beings, created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1: 26-26) have by their very existence an inherent value, worth and distinction”. Daniel G. Groody “Globalisation, Spirituality and Justice”

St Louis Catholic Academy acknowledges the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011). We understand our duty to every member of the school community to ensure they feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At St Louis Catholic Academy, equality is a key principle for treating all with respect and dignity and exercising our duty in relation to the nine protected characteristics. We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community.

At St Louis Catholic Academy, we understand that under the Equality Act, our general duties are to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

At St Louis Catholic Academy, we understand that under the Equality Act, our specific duties are to:

1. Publish equality information annually.
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

As a Catholic school, we are aware of and recognise the potential “conflict” between Catholic beliefs and some of the protected characteristics (most notably aspects of gender reassignment, civil partnerships and sexual orientation). At St Louis, we are absolutely committed to promoting acceptance and tolerance amongst both children and adults whilst also protecting the Catholic beliefs our school is built on and remembering that freedom of religious belief is a protected characteristic too.

Following discussion with other Catholic schools, the school has decided that our teaching will continue to be centred on respect, acceptance and celebrating both similarities and differences.

This policy has been drawn up as a result of discussion within a working party and has

been shared with the whole school community.

## **Policy Commitments**

### **Promoting Equality: Curriculum**

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

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to inclusion and diversity;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to inclusion and diversity;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs.

### **Promoting Equality: Achievement**

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of any of the protected characteristics. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- A range of teaching methods is 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;
- Everything we do at St Louis is pupil-centred and inclusive.

### **Promoting Equality: The ethos and culture of the school**

- At St Louis Catholic Academy, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;
- We strive to achieve a feeling of openness and acceptance which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities;
- Pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice for example, through the School Council, pupil perception surveys and regular opportunities for pupils to engage with teaching staff about their learning and the life of the school.

### **Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development**

- All recruitment is fully compliant with the legal requirements within the Equalities Act and our processes are available to be audited to ensure compliance;
- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity;
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;

- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of the equalities policy and practice;
- Recruitment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review.

### **Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying**

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

### **Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

St Louis Catholic Academy aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We will:

- Take action to ensure all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school;
- Maintain good channels of communication;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. EAL or pupils with disabilities are made to feel welcome.

### **Responsibility for the Policy**

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equality and accepting and celebrating diversity.

The governing body has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's Equalities Policy is maintained and updated regularly;
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The designated Equalities Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to these incidents.

The Head of School has responsibility for:

- In partnership with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Making sure the school equality policy and its procedures are followed by the whole school community;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Dealing with reports of discriminatory related incidents;
- Taking appropriate and proportionate action in cases of harassment and discrimination relating to the protected characteristics.

All school staff have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the school's equalities policy and schemes;

- Promoting equal opportunities for all;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other groups vulnerable to discrimination;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation;
- Taking up training and learning opportunities.

The staff member responsible for co-ordinating equalities activities and practice is Tanara Smith. She is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and diversity and evaluating impact;
- Making sure the equality policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and parents / guardians know about it;
- Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities in this regard;
- Working closely with the governor responsible for this area.
- Supporting positively the evaluation activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on pupils from different groups, e.g. SEN, Children who are looked after, Minority Ethnic including Traveller and EAL pupils, and children who are eligible for free school meals or Pupil Premium, in the following recommended areas:
  - Pupils' progress and attainment
  - Learning and teaching
  - Behaviour discipline and exclusions
  - Attendance
  - Admissions
  - Incidents of prejudice related bullying and all forms of bullying
  - Parental involvement
  - Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities
  - Staff recruitment and retention
  - Visits and visitors.

### **Measuring the Impact of this Policy**

The equalities policy and all other relevant policies will be evaluated and monitored for their equality impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. The main findings from equality impact assessments will be published for the school community.