



St Michael's CE (Controlled) Junior School

EQUALITIES POLICY

Creation Date		
Issue Date	January 2019	
Agreed & Authorised (Name & designation)	Mrs Steph Tyler Headteacher	Mr Ian White Chair of Governors
Signature(s)		
Next Review Date	January 2020	
Remarks		

1. Introduction

The Governing Body of the school recognises its responsibilities to all members of our school community. In accordance with those responsibilities, it wishes to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all our pupils, families, staff and all those individuals who undertake work on school premises. This policy aims to reflect and meet all legislative provision to promote equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination, including the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the principles under which the Governing Body of the school will operate to meet these aims.

We aim to ensure we meet the needs of all members of our community. In order to achieve this the policy has been discussed and agreed with all stakeholders. The Governing Body welcomes any comments or contributions to the policy document.

2. Statutory requirements

The Governing Body is bound by law not to discriminate on certain grounds. The Equality Act 2010 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one, providing a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The act includes a new integrated Equality Duty of all public bodies, effective from April 2011, which sets out the “protected characteristics” that qualify for protection from discrimination as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex; and
- Sexual orientation

The duty requires public bodies to do the following in respect of all these characteristics:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relationships between people with differing personal characteristics

The over-riding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all governors and staff in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

3. Statement of Intent

The Governing Body are committed to equality for all and value each individual’s right to respect, courtesy and the recognition of individual differences. The Governing Body recognises that the pupils, families and staff in our school community are drawn from a variety of social backgrounds, family structures, ethnic groups and religions. All adults and children alike will be given every opportunity to achieve, recognise their own worth and to play an important role in our community. The Governing Body and school leaders will ensure that:

- All decisions are pupil centred

- All pupils and staff are valued as individuals and encouraged to be confident and open-minded learners
- Any form of prejudice or discrimination is actively opposed
- High quality learning and an engaging curriculum reflects the backgrounds and interests of the school community
- Staff, parents and carers work together to meet high standards of attendance, work and behaviour
- Staff understand the importance of continual professional learning; they are knowledgeable, fair and adaptable

4. Race Equality

The Governing Body are committed to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination and the promotion of good relationships and equality of opportunity in the school regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

We aim to ensure that everyone feels safe and valued, engendering a sense of belonging amongst every member of the school community. Diversity is viewed as both enriching and essential to the success of the school.

Race discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. All staff are committed to responding to any racist incidents in accordance with our clear guidelines and expectations, as set out in our behaviour policy.

5. Disability Equality

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against anyone with disabilities based on assumptions of their ability to carry out tasks and or duties in the school. Therefore the Governing Body and staff will foster positive attitudes towards disability by promoting a deeper understanding of disability, actively challenging stereotypes, providing positive images and modelling respectful attitudes towards disabled children and adults.

Reasonable provision will be made for adjustments and adaptations to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in the curriculum and other opportunities, where this is practicable.

A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition of disability includes a wide range of impairments including those which are often hidden such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language and attention deficit disorders.

6. Gender Equality

The Governing Body is opposed to the unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender (including gender re-assignment) and will pro-actively promote equality of opportunity between the sexes.

All staff are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all, irrespective of gender or sex and recognise that definitions and choices may go beyond being male **or** female and include, for example, intersex and self-definitions of transgender. Gender bias and stereotypes are actively challenged and all pupils are

encouraged to take a full and active part in all areas of school life. All parents and carers are encouraged to participate fully in their child's education.

7. Religion and Belief

The Governing Body are opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on religious belief. All staff are committed, through education, to providing a positive environment, raising awareness of cultures and religion and actively promoting tolerance within our community. Members of all faiths or belief, alongside those without religious belief, will be treated with equal dignity, respect and fairness.

UNICEF highlighted:

'Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and others cultures.' (Article 29) and 'Children have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.' (Article 30).

8. Sexual Orientation

The Governing Body recognises the need to protect everyone from unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation. Staff are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within school.

The Governing Body recognises the existence and damage of homophobia and transphobia in society. Homophobia and transphobia amongst adults is classified as a hate crime and incidents may be reported to the police. Homophobia in and amongst children is much more likely to be about their lack of understanding. It is usually simply a learned response and not a considered view or opinion based on experience.

Homophobia and transphobia of any kind will not be tolerated in our school. Staff will not allow or support discrimination or prejudice or accept language or behaviour which is harmful or less than respectful to any individual person or group of people. Staff will always respond in a consistent, clear and positive way in dealing with any and all kinds of homo/transphobia or homo/transphobic abuse. Staff will enable pupils to understand that there are a range of differences, options and choices in peoples' lifestyles and that all differences are valid, valued and recognised.

9. Harassment or Bullying

The Governing Body are opposed to any forms of direct or indirect harassment or bullying. Staff will ensure that incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

10. Employment Practices

The Governing Body recognises the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Governing Body and managers of the school will operate at all times within the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in its staffing decisions. All decisions, including advertising of vacancies, shortlisting, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of school requirements. The only personal characteristics, which will be taken into account, will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of the work involved. There will be no generalised concepts or assumptions about the

characteristics of groups. All staff will have a right, through the agreed procedures, to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. Any member of staff who deliberately and knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.

There are some exemptions from this legislation in situations where the essential nature of a job calls for a man, woman, or a person from a particular religion or racial group.

The Governing Body will not normally seek to use exemptions from the above Acts.

The Governing Body will give sympathetic consideration to requests for time off or for religious observance from staff who are active members of particular religions or beliefs, although such time off will be unpaid and will be considered only subject to the operational requirements of the school.

The Governing Body will wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties created by applicants or members of staff who have a disability.

The Governing Body acknowledges these areas of regulation and confirms its commitment to enforce these statutory requirements in the school.

The over-riding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all governors and staff in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

11. Advertising of vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are exceptional reasons why this should not occur, for example in situations of potential redundancy.

12. Selection for appointment or promotion

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the Hampshire County Council Manual of Personnel practice which has been adopted in its entirety by the Governing Body.:

13. Specific Issues

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on the following forms of discrimination that may not have already been identified:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Marital status or civil partnership - The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against employees who are married or in a civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity - The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave.
- Race - There may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where an occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of

someone of one particular race or ethnic origin. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional, and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Harassment or bullying - The Governing Body is opposed to any unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The Governing Body is further opposed to any act of victimisation, harassment or bullying against any member of staff either by an employee or third party based on assumptions about their status in the above categories or any other grounds. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the school's procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

Non-statutory aspects - Although there is no statutory requirement not to discriminate against other groups, or characteristics of staff, the Governing Body wishes to state that it will not in any way discriminate against members of staff or applicants for posts on the grounds of their political affiliation.