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Board Meeting
17 July 2023

Review
Resources committee



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY (incorporating the PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY)

THE TRUST MISSION STATEMENT

Inspired by the life of Christ we provide an exceptional education in our Catholic schools which enables our children:

- to fully embrace all possibilities
- to flourish
- to develop their faith

and therefore to choose a path that enables them to be a positive influence upon our world.

'Prepare the Way' The Gospel of St Mark 1:3

St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust
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EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

1 Vision, Values and Ethos

The Directors, Local Governing Bodies and each school within the St John the Baptist Catholic MAT are deeply committed to the principles of equality. In each school we have a caring and supportive school ethos that seeks to value all individuals and ensure that they achieve their potential. Each school is active in its role in promoting equality of opportunity for everyone who makes up our school community.

Through our policies and practices we strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment that present barriers to both staff and students achieving their full potential. We actively promote positive, respectful attitudes and relationships between and amongst all members of our school community and encourage them to be active partners in the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life and beyond.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where everyone can develop their maximum potential and feel valued as individuals who can contribute to the life of our schools and society in general.

We have robust and supportive policies in place that are underpinned by our Catholic ethos which ensures that our practices actively promote equality of opportunity amongst staff and do not in any way discriminate against any gender in any area of recruitment, retention, promotion, training or any aspect of employment.

We are committed towards ensuring that the development, implementation and monitoring of our equality action plan (evidenced in our Trust Improvement Plans and individual School Improvement Plans) is the vehicle for actively embedding equality within our policies and practices.

The underlying and overriding principle of our faith in Jesus Christ binds us together in love, understanding and mutual enrichment.

'You are, all of you, sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. All baptised in Christ, you have all 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 Christ Jesus.'

(Galatians 3: 26-29)

The Gospel itself leaves us in no doubt that our belief in its values should place us in the forefront of the movement for equality between all members of our community of schools.

2 The Legal Context

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

We understand that from time to time further legislation and guidance is published by Government and relevant legal bodies and we will continually monitor and implement relevant policy and practice to ensure compliance.

3 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act and came into force on 1 October 2010. A key measure in the Act is the **Public Sector Equality Duty**, which came into force on 5 April 2011. The Public Sector Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

The aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act. The prohibition and prevention of discrimination and harassment applies to all members of the community, including staff, governors, students, parents, volunteers and job applicants.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The protected characteristics under the Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the PSED, all public sector bodies are required to:

- **Publish relevant information regarding our compliance with the duty.** The Trust decides which information is relevant and we can reference other information (either internal data or other publicly available data) without the need to reproduce it. This information must be published annually.
- **Set and publish equality objectives** Equality objectives are determined by the Trust, and then each school can add their own bespoke objectives based on local circumstances. The objectives must be reviewed every four years. Equality objectives are developed into action plans within key Trust and school documents, most notably the Trust Improvement and Development Plan and each School Improvement and Development Plan.

4 Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners, members of staff*, directors, governors and volunteers are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, members of staff, governors, directors and volunteers as of equal value:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity
- whether or not they are married or in a civil partnership
- whether or not they are pregnant or on maternity leave

(*Staff = all individuals working at all grades, including senior managers, employees, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual workers and agency staff)

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate* but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- age
- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of people of all genders are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity
- marital/civil partnership status
- pregnancy and maternity

*discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards people of different ages and an absence of harassment of elderly people
- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents

- mutual respect and good relations between genders, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment
- mutual respect and good relations between people regardless of marital or civil partnership status
- positive attitudes towards those who are pregnant or have had children

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity
- whatever their marital or civil partnership status
- whether they may be pregnant or have had children

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- people of different ages
- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of different genders
- people of different sexualities
- people of different marital status or civil partnership status
- people who may or may not be pregnant, or who may or may not have had children

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult widely and will aim to involve:

- people of different ages
- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- all genders
- all sexualities
- all those with different marital/civil partnership statuses
- all those who may or may not be pregnant, and those who may or may not have had children

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- people of different ages
- disabled people as well as non-disabled people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- all genders
- all sexualities
- all people, regardless of marital/civil partnership status
- all people, regardless of whether or not they may be pregnant, or who may or may not have had children

Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

Principle 9: Measurable objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8).

The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

Our equality objectives are integrated into the Trust and each school's improvement plans.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them in our Public Sector Equality Duty Report.

5 Responsibilities

All directors, governors, staff, volunteers, students and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the Trust's Equality & Diversity Policy and PSED. In addition:

The Trust Directors are responsible for ensuring that the Trust prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews this Equality & Diversity Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Each Head teacher works with their Local Governing Body to ensure that:

- this Policy, the PSED and Action Plan are implemented

- staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote equality and diversity
- all staff, students and their parents/ carers are consulted regarding, and are aware of the school's responsibilities to meet, the Equality Duty
- existing and planned policies are assessed for the ways in which they impact on equality and diversity
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities take account of the need to promote equality and diversity
- incidents of sexual, gender, racist, ageist, or disabled bullying or harassment are dealt with according to the Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying policies and the Code of Conduct for staff
- the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan is published on the SJB CMAT website and copies of are available in the office of each of the schools

All staff have a responsibility to deal with incidents of harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities (including work with parents / carers) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote equality and diversity.

Students and parents / carers have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the policy, as do **visitors** to the school.

6 The Specific Duties

We are working to develop our understanding of the major equality and diversity issues in each school's functions and services. In order to do this we:

- collect and analyse school data and other equality-relevant information.
- consult all staff, students, parents / carers and relevant communities
- review all our Trust and school policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on equality and diversity
- ensure directors, governors, staff, students, parents and others in our schools are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting equality and diversity
- assess and address the causes of any pay gap related to protected characteristics
- publish and implement the Action Plan within our TIDP and SIDPs with our proposed objectives and actions

We will:

- set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments
- report on progress annually and set further objectives where necessary

- review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years

7 Consultation; publishing; staff, students and parent / carer development

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with directors, governors, staff, the trades unions and the school community. These consultations have contributed to developing the awareness among directors, governors, staff, students and parents / carers of the ongoing need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality and diversity.

We will continue to develop awareness of what constitutes unlawful discrimination and harassment, and of the need to eliminate this and to promote equality and diversity.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

8 Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the head teacher, the Directors of the Trust and Local Governing Bodies as appropriate.

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

St John the Baptist Catholic MAT Equality Action Plan

9 Each school's commitment to equality and diversity

a. Ethos

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- promoting an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect among all members of the school community, regardless of protected characteristic;

- ensuring that all staff, parents/carers and students are treated with dignity;
- challenging stereotypes in all aspects of school life;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of issues related to protected characteristics which reflect on stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- striving to eliminate all forms of bullying and violence

b. Curriculum, learning and teaching

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- ensuring equality of access for all students to all areas of the curriculum, to include subject choice and careers advice to meet students' individual needs;
- ensuring that the curriculum is balanced, broadly based and culturally inclusive that provides opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- ensuring that teachers' planning and delivery takes account of issues related to protected characteristics and the need to challenge stereotypes;
- ensuring that resources in all areas of the curriculum promote knowledge and understanding of issues related to protected characteristics;
- ensuring that any particular learning needs of the genders are met

c. Achievement, attainment, assessment progress

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- having procedures to monitor and track progress and achievement by protected characteristics in order to identify and respond to trends and patterns;
- striving to maintain equally high expectations of all students

d. Attendance

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- monitoring student attendance by protected characteristics;
- using the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance

e. Behaviour

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- monitoring student behaviour and exclusions by protected characteristics;
- using the information collected to ensure that procedures are applied fairly and equitably to all students, ensuring their safety and security in the school;

- developing and implementing strategies to address any specific examples of inappropriate behaviour related to protected characteristics

f. Staff recruitment, training, career development and conditions of service

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality and diversity by:

- ensuring that all staff, directors and governors responsible for appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay do not discriminate against members of staff according to the protected characteristics;
- taking account of the requirement to eliminate unlawful pay discrimination;
- ensuring that opportunities for professional development, career progression and promotion are free from unlawful discrimination
- monitoring workforce composition and promotions to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels
- reviewing regularly conditions of service, benefits and facilities to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them

g. Community and parental / carer consultation

The school will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- working in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community to develop positive attitudes to issues relating to the protected characteristics

10 Implementation

The school's development/improvement planning process will be the main vehicle for implementing the policy. The process for implementation is as follows:

- Ensuring this policy is freely available to the Local Governing Body, staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers and visitors to the schools including all contractors, and where necessary making its provisions explicit
- undertaking audit throughout the year to inform our action planning, including:
 - i. auditing the current progress and attainment of all students by the protected characteristics*, using ASPs and other data, and the school's data tracking system
 - ii. targets to improve the performance of students with protected characteristics* in any core area
 - iii. enhancing opportunities for students with protected characteristics* equally to participate in extra-curricular activities

- iv. monitoring the attendance and exclusion data by protected characteristics*
- v. monitoring data on behaviour by protected characteristics* and dissemination to the appropriate Local Governors' Committee
- vi. analysis of any student rewards by protected characteristics*
- vii. analysis of participation in school trips and visits by protected characteristics*
- viii. monitoring those staff undertaking middle management and leadership training according to protected characteristics*
- ix. monitoring the implementation of this policy via staff consultation
- x. reviewing existing policies informed by the light of these duties
- xi. develop the awareness among directors, governors, staff, students and parents of the ongoing need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality by consulting and disseminating this policy and action plan to all groups

*where known

- developing training for all staff, directors and governors

11 Associated Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures are relevant to the Trust's approach to ensuring the aims of the equality duty are met, some are centrally decided by Directors and some by Local Governing Bodies – details are in the list of policies produced by the Trust or local schools:

- SJB CMAT PSED Annual Report
- SJB CMAT Performance Development, Appraisal & Capability Policies and Procedures for Teachers and Support Staff
- SJB CMAT Pay Policy
- SJB CMAT Complaints Policy and Procedure
- SJB CMAT Data Protection Policy
- SJB CMAT Code of Conduct Policy
- SJB CMAT Dignity at Work Policy
- SJB CMAT Whistle-blowing Policy
- SJB CMAT Employee Disciplinary Procedures
- SJB CMAT Contracts of Employment
- SJB CMAT Grievance Procedures
- SJB CMAT Safer Recruitment Selection Policy
- SJB CMAT Safeguarding Policy
- SJB CMAT Allegations of Abuse Policy
- SJB CMAT Discretionary Leave of Absence Policy
- Local Schools' Policies as appropriate, e.g. Behaviour & Anti Bullying, Curriculum, Admissions, SEN, Learning, Attendance, Safeguarding etc.

When these policies are reviewed, consideration will be given to the aims of the equality duty and more generally to the Trust and each school's commitment to value all people equally.

12 Data relating to our adherence to the Public Sector Equality Duty

The following is a list of the data that we will publish annually in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Reference to External Examinations and DfE Analysis– relative performance of different groups of students in each school across the Trust
- Summary of behaviour data (inc. exclusions) broken down by characteristics (where known)
- Report showing the 'makeup' of current staff by characteristic (gender, race, etc.) at different grades and whether they are full or part time, where we have the information.
- Report of specific complaints/incidents of bullying specifically related to age, race, religion, gender or sexuality – this should include 'nil' responses. This will include grievance and dismissal information for staff with relevant protected characteristics
- Reference to any sections of a schools Self Evaluation Form or SIDP which provide evidence of the way in which we have promoted equality &/or important actions agreed which relate to promoting equality during the year

This information will be published as part of each Head teacher's report to local governors at the Spring Term meeting of the local governing body and collated centrally by the CEO into a single summary report presented to Directors in the autumn term.

13 St John the Baptist Catholic MAT approach to the PSED

We are a Catholic MAT where every person is a valued member of our community.

- ***We proclaim by our lives even more than by our words that God is good***
- ***We honour the dignity and sacredness of each person***
- ***We educate for and act on behalf of justice and peace in the world***
- ***We commit ourselves to community service***
- ***We embrace the gift of diversity***
- ***We create community among those with whom we work and with those we serve***
- ***We develop holistic learning communities which educate for life***

As a Catholic, Christian Trust, rooted in the message of the Gospel, the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are a central part of our mission.

All Trust policies and procedures start from our mission as a Catholic Christian community and we constantly review all that we do in the light of our mission statement.

St John the Baptist Catholic MAT Equality Objectives

- **We aim for all students to reach their potential**
- **We will promote a diverse work force**
- **We promote fair access to appropriate development opportunities for all staff**
- **We seek the views of members of our school communities (students, parents, staff and our wider community) in order to inform the Trust's ongoing planning and review process**

14 Equality Objectives in Trust and School Planning

These objectives will inform and be part of the Trust's Improvement and Development Plan and relevant information with regard to progress is shared with Directors regularly and will be published on the Trust website in reports such as the PSED Annual Report.

Review of these objectives will take into account Trust and school priorities generated through the Trust and school's ongoing review cycles which are informed by the collection of data including the views of students, parents and members of staff. These objectives, in addition to each school's additional bespoke equality objectives form part of each School Improvement and Development Plan.

15 School Specific Equality Objectives

Each School will review and agree upon any additional Equality Objectives in light of the school context and reflect those Equality Objectives in their own SIDP.