



**St Mary's Catholic College**  
Wallasey

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## 2022-2023

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## Statement of Intent – Promoting Diversity in the Church School Workforce

In the Gospel according to Mark, Jesus Christ bestows upon his followers two unassailable truths:

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’ (Mark 12:30-31)*

Christ did not give any exceptions for this love of our neighbour, therefore any kind of prejudice or discriminatory behaviour is incompatible with our faith.

We recognise that certain groups in society have been disadvantaged because of discrimination they have faced. Despite progress, unfortunately prejudice still exists today both explicitly and implicitly, and many still face discrimination due to their religion, race, sex, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or age.

Our collective Church teachings on human dignity and dignity in work give us a very clear instruction that our communities must not only stamp out prejudice wherever we find it, but take positive steps to building a more equal society.

As the providers of a third of all schools in England we know the invaluable contribution school staff make in shaping the attitudes of generations of children. Therefore, Church schools must be positive working environments where all pupils and staff can flourish free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation.

As the ecumenical bodies supporting Church schools in England we commit to:

- Promoting understanding of all protected characteristics<sup>1</sup> in Church schools
- Promoting best practice in staff recruitment, retention and development
- Ensuring that all national employment policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic<sup>2</sup>
- Regular research and monitoring to identify any inequalities and barriers that potentially exist
- Ensuring any guidance on governance matters promotes diversity and equal opportunities
- Working with representative organisations and other faith groups to foster community cohesion

October 2020

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in the Equalities Act 2010.

<sup>2</sup> As above

## **1 - CONTEXT**

1.1 Responsibility for Equality cannot be delegated and all staff of HFCMAT must exercise due regard in their day to day operations. The Trust's commitment to the identification and removal of barriers to success for all is based on the following core values and ethos expressed in our vision statement which can be viewed on our website – [www.hfcmat.com](http://www.hfcmat.com)

1.2 The Equality Act 2010 (which came into force on April 5th 2011) has replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public service. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

1.3 Equality of opportunity at HFCMAT is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents, directors and local community members.

1.4 The Accessibility Plan is fully consistent with the school's SEN policies and SEN legislation. It should also be applied consistently within other school and Trust policies.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

1.5 The General Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010 requires schools, in the exercise of their functions and decisions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.6 The specific duties of the PSED states that academies are required to:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the PSED annually.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

## **2 AIMS**

2.1 We aim to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- a) creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- b) building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so they can use these qualities to achieve their full potential and become rounded citizens of the wider community;

- c) having consistent expectations of the pupils and their learning;
- d) removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- e) ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our curriculum and lesson planning;
- f) actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality through our curriculum;
- g) making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and discriminatory behaviour;
- h) ensuring school resources reflect society as a whole;
- i) having clear procedures for dealing with discriminatory incidents and that these are understood by all; and
- j) ensuring all pupils develop mutual respect through our school's ethos, teachings and adult example.

2.2 These aims are designed to ensure that our schools meet their own needs and those of their communities, taking account the nine protected characteristics; race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships and gender reassignment. The philosophy of HFCMAT is based on inclusive principles which strive to promote equality. Equality of opportunity at HFCMAT is about providing equal access and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement.

### **3 RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1 The Trust is responsible for:

- Ensuring every school within the Trust complies with equality-related legislation.
- Ensuring the policy and its procedures are implemented.
- Ensuring all other school policies promote equality.
- Giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.

3.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy and its related procedures.
- Making all staff aware of their responsibilities and providing training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Taking appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensuring that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff.
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

3.3 All staff are responsible for:

- Enacting this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.
- Dealing with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and knowing how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality and good relations and not discriminating on any grounds.
- Attending such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.

## 4. FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

**Discrimination** by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

**Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics outlined in Appendix A. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

**Harassment** related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

**Victimisation** is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

## 5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 School and Trust policies reflect a commitment to equality.

5.2 Governing bodies and school leadership teams set a clear ethos that reflect our school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

5.3 SMCC and the Trust promote positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

5.4 The school leadership team will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

5.5 Directors, Governors and Staff contribute to policy documents. Parents can request to see policies and have their views noted. Regular feedback is obtained from a range of stakeholders including:

- School councils, PSHE lessons and student voice surveys;
- Staff surveys, meetings and INSET
- EHCP, IHCP and regular SEND review meetings
- parents' evenings and meetings

- Governing body meetings

## **6 STAFFING, RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

6.1 SMCC adheres to recruitment and selection procedures that are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and guidelines.

6.2 All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.

6.3 Equality policy and practice will be covered in all staff inductions.

6.4 All temporary staff are made aware of equality policy and practice.

6.5 Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

6.6 Staff training needs and associated development opportunities will be identified through regular staff appraisals, in line with the school's Teacher Appraisal Policy and Support Staff Performance Management Policy. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit. The trust will adopt good practice in terms of data collection and use this data to monitor and measure the attraction, recruitment, retention and progression of staff.

## **7 CURRICULUM**

7.1 Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils. The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated where appropriate to ensure the inclusion of all pupils.

7.2 SMCC monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for all pupils.

7.3 Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils.

7.4 Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment.

## **8. DISABILITY & DISCRIMINATION**

8. 1 The school will encourage staff who are disabled or become disabled to inform the headteacher or their line manager about their condition so that the school can support them as appropriate.

8. 2 Staff experiencing difficulties at work because of their disability (physical or otherwise) may wish to contact their line manager or Operations Manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Their line manager or HR may wish to consult with the staff member and a medical adviser about possible adjustments.

8. 3 The governing board will monitor the physical environment of the school premises to consider whether certain features place physically disabled staff, job applicants, service users, or other stakeholders at a substantial disadvantage compared to others. Where reasonable, the school will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

## **9 BREACHES**

9.1 If a member of staff believes that they may have been discriminated against, they will be encouraged to raise the matter through the school's Grievance Policy. If they believe that they may have been subject to harassment, they will be encouraged to raise the matter with their line manager.

9.2 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 Policy and Procedure.

9.3 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. The school takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

## **10 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

10.1 The Equality Information Advice and Guidance Policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

10.2 Progress towards the Action Plan will be reviewed as part of each school's annual evaluation of its Improvement Plan.

10.3 The results of that evaluation will be reported to the Governors' via the Head's report.



10.4 Evidence for the evaluation will include: actions taken; resources deployed; scrutiny of school communication systems; lesson observations; and a judgment of the impact on teaching and learning. Student/parent/staff and governor voice will be employed as appropriate.

10.5 Each school's plan is coordinated by the SLT, although other lead staff are identified in the plan.

10.6 School-specific Contextual Notes or Procedures are located on our school websites.

## **Annexe A**

Every 2 years SMCC will set specific equality targets to improve the provision set out within this policy.

### **Objective 1: Quality of Education**

- a) To ensure the curriculum offer is equitable for all groups of students
- b) To work towards closing the achievement gap between disadvantages and non-disadvantaged students across all subjects, with a particular focus on English and Maths
- c) Ensure that barriers to achievement are tackled with a focus on improving reading skills of all students.
- d) Track destination data to ensure all students are successful in moving to their next steps.

### **Objective 2: Attendance**

- a) Ensure rigorous systems are in place to track the attendance of all students and monitor trends amongst vulnerable groups.
- b) To create action plans for specific students or groups to address any emerging trends.

### **Objective 3: Cultural development**

- a) To promote cultural development through the delivery of the Inspire Programme
- b) To ensure full participation of all groups of students in the Inspires experiences
- c) To ensure the Inspire programme and wider curriculum educates all students around discrimination and prejudice-based bullying.

Equality objective action plan



# Accessibility Plan

## 2022-2024

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1. **Accessibility definition and vision**
2. **How is the College accessible for those with a physical or sensory need?**
3. **How is the College accessible for those with a learning difficulty?**
4. **How does the College listen to all stakeholders?**
5. **How is the College accessible for parents with a disability?**
6. **How does our College meet the needs of those students who are joining our College from KS2?**
7. **How does our College meet the needs of those students who are joining our sixth form who have additional needs?**

### 1. Accessibility definition and Vision

All students are respected, nurtured and embraced within our College community irrespective of their physical, emotional or educational need or disability. Our College accessibility plan meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (see below) as well as the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

Definition of Equality :

The Equality Act 2010 provides this definition of disability:

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Section 28D of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (“the Act”) requires local authorities and schools to prepare accessibility strategies and plans for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can access and make use of the education and services provided by schools.

The Equality Act, 2010 states that because of this Act our College should provide:

- ·An increase to the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school’s curriculum
- · Improvement in the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school
- Improvement in the delivery to disabled students of information which is readily accessible to students who are disabled
- Improves and enables students with disabilities to make expected progress in their learning

St. Mary’s College is committed to providing all its children with an education of the highest possible standards irrespective of any special educational need or disability. We want our students to have the necessary skills that allow them to become independent learners and to take their place in the community and wider world having the skills, empathy and social understanding that allows them to become changemakers. We strongly promote the social,

moral, and spiritual, cultural, emotional and physical development of our pupils. We offer an inclusive approach to such learning within the school through the teaching of RSE, PSHE and the Inspire curriculum that teaches about diversity and inclusion. We strive to make our school accessible to all pupils to enable them to participate fully in the school curriculum both the College academic curriculum, and the extended opportunities such as residentials, extra curricular opportunities and sporting teams and clubs.

### **How is our College accessible for those students with a physical or sensory need?**

St. Mary's College is fully accessible for any person with a physical disability. The following adjustments have been made to the school building:

- The school building is made up of a central one storey modern building with three two storey buildings each accessible via three lifts.
- Ramps give wheelchair or physically impaired students with access to all areas of the school including the front and back entrance, the dining room and the front reception area of school. There is also access to the dining room via a ramp from outside of the Reception area.
- Corridors are wide enough to ensure wheelchair accessibility, and the students follow a one way system to move around the school building safely. Some students leave lessons earlier than others due and are issued with a pass for this.
- Evac chairs are available in each building to ensure the safety of any student with a physical disability to be exited out of school safely should there be an emergency.
- The building is modern and bright with lots of open spaces throughout which increases the natural light within the school. All lighting has been assessed by the vision support team as meeting the needs of any person with a visual impairment.
- Throughout the school there are coloured strips to assist in the accessibility of those with a visual impairment, these allow everybody to see where the entrances to each stair case are and where rooms such as the dining room, theatre and toilets are demarcated.
- In the PE areas there are separate changing areas for students including some smaller changing areas for any student with additional needs to use. There is a lift that takes students with disabilities to the Sports Hall.
- There are two designated disabled toilets in two areas of the school (PE and MFL). One toilet has a Closomat toilet installed, a bidet, two hand sinks at different heights to ensure accessibility for all, a seat based shower and an adult sized change facility mat.

There are sanitary waste bins within this toilet facility. Students and attached staff are given keys to facilitate use of the toilet and to ensure its safe use.

- There are designated disabled parking bays for parents of students with disabilities to use.

### **How is our College accessible to those with a learning disability?**

As part of the SEND reforms, the school has published their Local Offer which provides clear, comprehensive, accessible and up to date information about the available provision and how to access it. All areas of the curriculum will be available to pupils regardless of their disability.

- Sensory support service (hearing and vision) work collaboratively with the SEND team, classroom teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that the needs of those with a visual or hearing impairment are able to access the curriculum alongside their peers
- St. Mary's believes strongly in creating an inclusive environment and has an experienced team of teaching assistants working at Level 2, 3 and HLTA who ensure that students' needs are met either within the classroom setting or in high quality interventions
- All staff have access to high quality person centred plans and are part of the creation and monitoring of such plans
- The SEND team works collaboratively with a wide range of professionals including Kilgarth Outreach, HSIS, CAMHS, Caritas, Speech and Language team, Educational Psychologists and SENAT to ensure that effective assessments are carried out and expert advice is disseminated into classroom practice
- Regular reviews of the the curriculum take place to ensure that it meets both the demands of the National Curriculum and those of our College community
- The school in liaison with specialist NHS staff purchase specialist equipment for pupils including high stools, writing slopes, pencil grips, sensory resources and modified books.
- The Student Support Hub has a space whereby students requiring a reduced or modified curriculum are able to receive higher level support in a smaller space.
- Those students identified as having higher levels of needs have a personalised plan in place called a PCP - this is usually drawn together with the student, their parent/carer and shared with their teachers and support staff. This is then modified as staff share their own supportive strategies that work for the student within their care.
- For students with autism, the school has a designated provision called ARC. This is funded by the Local Authority and requires students to have autism diagnosis as a primary need, identified through an EHCP. ARC students follow a National Curriculum taught by SEND specialist staff with a high staffing ratio. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of individuals according to their EHCPs.
- There is an after school study/HWK support group available within the Hub. This is staffed by the the TA3 team and supports any child in years 7-13 who need study or HWK support
- Arbor has any student identified as having any medical or SEND need as part of its information available to all staff (including supply staff). All medical and SEND information such as the EHCP or the PCP are readily available to all staff via ARBOR.

Training is given as to how to access this information annually and when any new member of staff joins the school as part of the College's induction procedures.

- The SEND team presents to the whole staff regarding SEND issues, training or student updates throughout the year. Weekly there are student 'spotlights' whereby a student requiring additional support is a 'spotlight' and strategies for working with them are shared with staff. These are led by SEND, pastoral team and teachers.
- The SEND team holds a weekly SEND session for all staff each Thursday where they are able to share, discuss and raise any issues or concerns they may have regarding a student or group of students.
- Examination concessions are routinely screened, assessed and made available for any students who may need this in Y9. . Adjustments such as using a laptop, a scribe, prompt, additional time or a reader are accommodated by the SEND team working collaboratively with the examinations officer. Any student requiring a smaller venue due to anxiety or examination stress is accommodated by the SEND team.

#### **Stakeholder Voice:**

- Those students with an EHCP/PFA have their views listened to, collated and shared within their annual review. This review also features the views of their parent/carer and any other person the student/parent feels should be represented in the review meeting.
- Students and their parents are part of the person centred planning review meetings that take place where a student requires a Wave 2 or Wave 3 support.
- Parents are invited monthly to the SEND parental coffee mornings - these are informal gatherings but it is an opportunity to have their views and opinions listened to. Feedback forms are provided and reviewed to improve this experience.
- Small 'student voice' groups meet to look at SEND, Diversity and Inclusion groups and other minority groups within our College to ensure that their voices are heard. They are integral into shaping elements of both school life and experiences as well as what is taught within our curriculum.
- Staff voice is collected regularly around curriculum, assessment, wellbeing and behaviour and culture. Staff are part of working groups assigned to an area on the College Improvement Plan and meet with senior leaders to shape policy.
- Parents are invited to regular on line sessions to ensure that they are clear about College policy and can have their views listened to

#### **How is the College accessible for all parents with a disability?**

- Disabled parking bays and ramp accessibility for those with a physical disability or using a wheel chair
- Resources produced using larger fonts or different colours on request



- BSL interpreter available (on request) for any parent requiring this - the College uses Action on Hearing usually. Once we are aware that a parent uses an interpreter this will be automatically booked for any parental event and training provided for staff as to how to work alongside the interpreter.

### **How does the College ensure the effective transition of students from KS2-KS3?**

- Contact is made with all stakeholders in the Spring term of Y6: parents, SEND and pastoral teams telephone each parent and school to welcome them and to ensure that all relevant information is shared with the Transition team
- The College has a designated Transition team ; a HOY, a team of transition form teachers and the KS3 SENDCO to ensure that all needs are met in the process of Transition
- The primary and College SENDCOs meet and ensure that all health care and SEND information is shared and disseminated to staff to ensure the smooth transition of the Y6 students
- The SEND team creates a SEND register and shares with all staff ready for the Y6 induction day in July
- The SEND team has an enhanced transition plan working alongside the pastoral team, that gives the most vulnerable or high needs students access to time in school in preparation for the whole year group induction day

### **How does the College ensure the effective transition of students from KS4 to the 6th Form?**

- Y11 AIM process (additional intervention meeting) will take place once the students have chosen their subjects for KS5. This ensures that the correct qualifications have been applied to study. It also ensures that the SEND register is correct for 6th form.
- HOY and pastoral coach work with a small group of experienced 6th form form tutors. These tutors ensure that the needs are met for all students within their care, including the guidance and support required for completing personal statements and post 6th form applications
- There are designated specialist teaching assistants who support any student with PFA/EHCP in the 6th form with organisation, working to deadlines, applications and visits to other Colleges and universities and any other support tasks required
- Examination concessions are routinely screened, assessed and made available for any students who may need this. Adjustments such as using a laptop, a scribe, prompt, additional time or a reader are accommodated by the SEND team working collaboratively with the examinations officer. Any student requiring a smaller venue due to anxiety or examination stress is accommodated by the SEND team.