

Policy last reviewed:	01/06/2018
Policy due for renewal:	01/11/2019
Committee responsible:	Whole
Lead member of staff:	BG

Single Equalities POLICY Bedford Catholic Schools Trust

Rationale

The Bedford Catholic Schools Trust has a distinctive Catholic ethos which values each individual as a unique child of God. All students and staff who enter our schools have an equal value and therefore an entitlement to full equality of opportunity. The schools continue to strive to eliminate any gaps in achievement by analysing outcomes for groups as evidence of equality in opportunity.

The Trust recognises the need to eliminate any form of discrimination, breaking down any associated barriers. The schools will promote and celebrate “Equality for All” regardless of age, disability, race, ethnic or national origins, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and family responsibilities (Young Carers) thus embracing all strands of equality. The Trust of Schools understand their legal and moral responsibilities and embrace and celebrate their rich diversity at every opportunity, whilst equally attentive to their tradition as Catholic Schools and their mission to uphold the teachings of the Church.

This Single Equality Scheme encompasses equality in all forms including, Disability, Race/ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Age, Faith/belief and Re-assignment of Gender. Whilst being consistent with previous schemes and policies, it represents a co-ordinated approach to Equality and Diversity and a commitment to an ongoing process of positive development. It is the Trust’s vision to provide an environment in which discrimination in all its forms is deemed to be unacceptable and to treat everyone equally, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnicity, belief, age, mental or physical health or sexual orientation. Tackling discrimination and promoting healthy relationships with people is wholly consistent with the Trust’s pursuit of excellence and its deeply embedded spirituality.

The Equalities Act Statutory Requirements: The School's Single Equality Scheme (SES) covers the statutory duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006, and also protects against discrimination on the grounds of age, sexual orientation and religion. The Scheme will integrate equality and fair treatment issues into our core priorities and functions. It incorporates existing, revised policies: Race Equality and Equal Opportunities along with new Disability Equality (previously Accessibility) and Gender Equality Policy. Leadership and commitment at all levels of the organisation are central to the success of the Scheme. In everything we do, we will consider how we can ensure that we do not discriminate against or disadvantage individuals or group, and we will seek opportunities to promote equality and diversity wherever we can. We recognise that the Scheme is a work in progress, to be consulted on and refined as necessary any practical steps to be taken are presented as an action plan.

To ensure that the Trust not only fulfils its legal position in relation to current and future Equality Legislation, but additionally, goes beyond compliance in "Providing and Promoting Opportunities for All" free from any aspect of discrimination. Thus aiming to ensure that the Trust of schools are places where:-

1. All who learn and work have the opportunity to participate fully and achieve their full potential with appropriate support where necessary
2. Physical, social and economic barriers to accessing the curriculum are minimised
3. The environment is welcoming and supportive
4. Everyone (Governors, employees, volunteers and students) accepts their responsibility to uphold equality and show respect to others
5. All complaints of any strand of Equality are investigated and appropriate actions are taken
6. The Trust strives to be a community in which everyone can live learn and grow regardless of gender, race sexual orientation, disability or other barriers to learning.

Objectives

- 1a to promote a positive attitude towards diversity to include students from different ethnic backgrounds, students with disabilities and students of a different sexual orientation through purposeful teaching and enjoyable learning opportunities
- 1b to promote language in schools which shows respect for difference and to positively challenge language which shows a lack of respect through use and monitoring of the Racist and Bullying log in school
- 1c to link with other schools across the community to share good practice which supports the teaching and learning of the diverse group of learners in our care.
- 1d to continue to develop teaching and learning in school to support the explicit and implicit learning of all so that due preparation is made for life beyond the classroom
- 1e to use agreed common approaches and strategies for EAL and SEND students in order to support the progress of different ethnic groups as well as different levels

- of disability through INSET, Staff Briefing and the publication to staff of documentation.
- 1f to provide relevant CPD for staff in targeting individual student progress and wellbeing
 - 1g to disseminate information about the student cohort through documentation, such as Day One Information, EAL List, the School SEF and Induction
- 2a to offer cross-curricular opportunities to develop a strong sense of cultural diversity
 - 2b to teach pupils to be respectful and tolerant of others who are different to themselves through assemblies, RE, PSE and the well-defined ethos of the school
 - 2c to deliver a robust RSE programme which is in keeping with the ethos of the school and supports the idea of sexuality as positive and a gift from God
 - 2d to work collaboratively with the local, national and international communities to foster a positive sense of community cohesion both within the school and towards further communities
- 3a to review the environment annually or as a response to a concern so that the environments within the schools are fully inclusive to staff and students
 - 3b to promote positive visual images of staff and students from different ethnic groups and levels of ability so that positive models of achievement are seen and recognised
 - 3c to ensure that reception staff and other staff meet and greet all visitors to the school with an openness of spirit and a respect for individuality
 - 3d to carry out an audit of provision annually or in response to a situation to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for staff and students who present barriers to their effective working within the workplace (This to be done in consultation with HR where staff are concerned)
- 4a to ensure that the work of the SEND and EAL Department fully supports the achievement of students on their lists through the monitoring of whole school strategies
 - 4b to ensure that all staff are aware of the strategies which are effective in bridging achievement gaps based on gender and that these are revisited annually so that their effectiveness can be re evaluated
 - 4c to effectively provide feedback to the SLT and the Directors regularly on the progress of all groups of students
 - 5c through effective training and leadership to ensure that all staff, students, volunteers and Directors model their responsibility to uphold equality and show respect for all
- 5a to ensure an audit is completed regularly to monitor racist incidents, bullying due to disability, sexual orientation or gender of both staff and students
 - 5b to monitor the attendance and achievement of students according to their ethnic groups, SEND, FSM, and gender to ensure that gaps in achievement are known and acted upon

- 5c to make reasonable adjustments to working and learning opportunities to support inclusion for all groups of staff and students
- 5d to monitor through Learning Walks, SEN lesson plans, focus weeks, tracking the progress of Ethnic Minority students, Students with a Disability, Gender Differences (Trans and students for whom their sexual orientation has become an issue for them)
- 5e to monitor and evaluate the work of the teacher responsible for Equal Opportunities so that there is compliance with the Equalities Act at all times
- 5e to monitor the performance and profile of our learners and our staff profile; in terms of race, disability, gender and additionally for staff, age to ensure parity of opportunity
- 5f Equality and Diversity is reviewed annually with an Action Plan arising from the GCSE and A level results and pertinent issues through the year.
- 6a to ensure that staff and students own this policy across the federation and meet regularly to review and discuss it in age related focus groups as part of the Equality and Diversity Committee
- 6b to celebrate the diversity of our Federation of Catholic Schools both as individual schools and where appropriate collectively

All policies need to be checked against the following questions which support the Equalities Policy.

Race, Gender and Disability Equality Monitoring

- 1. Does this policy have any implications for race, gender and disability equality?**
- 2. If 'yes', will it advantage or disadvantage any particular group?**
- 3. How will this policy, if relevant, promote good relations?**

Success Criteria

- Robust monitoring of all incidents covered by the Equalities Act
- Lowest possible numbers of Racist Incidents and Homophobic Bullying Incidents
- Inclusion of specific training to all staff on the context of the school and the policy on the Equalities Act as part of Induction and at intervals thereafter
- A consistent use of the questions pertaining to the Equalities Act addressed to all policies.
- An Action Plan of Compliance is in place in each of the Trust Schools.