Equalities Policy 2026-2028

Approved by:	Directors
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Policy Owner	Chaplaincy

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust Mission Statement

"As a family of schools, inspired by Our Lady Immaculate, we flourish, we love and we aspire to be who God has called us to be." Mission Statement

The Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust has a distinctive Catholic ethos, which values and seeks to love each individual as a unique child of God called to flourish in this Trust. All students and staff who enter our schools have an equal value and therefore an entitlement to full equality of opportunity so that they can aspire to who God calls them to be. 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 and 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 consistent with previous schemes and policies, it represents a coordinated 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.

1. Aim of the Policy

This policy sets out Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust's commitment to be an Education Trust that:

- Is free from discrimination and prejudice
- Treats all people regardless of their sex or gender reassignment; marital status (including civil partnership); sexual orientation; the colour of their skin, language, ethnic or national origins and nationality including citizenship; religious belief; disability and / or medical conditions; whether they have dependents; trade union membership status and activity or political views/affiliations.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all stakeholders within the Trust schools, regardless of how long they have been employed, their contractual hours and contract type

Definitions

"Equality is about opportunity, access, participation and contribution on a fair and equal footing and providing a framework for this to happen

The term "diversity" acknowledges there are differences between people and this Trust values and respects the variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values and beliefs of all its stakeholders.

3. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the school to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

Please see the Department for Education Advice for Schools at the following address for more information: -

https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/aboutequality-and-diversity

4. Guiding Principles

- At Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust, we are committed to providing equality of opportunity by eliminating discrimination. We will do this by ensuring that our practices reflect relevant employment legislation and good practice. Our employment decisions are based upon job related, relevant criteria.
- We are committed to having a workforce that reflects the diversity within our community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- We are committed to the principle of appointing the best person for the job

5. Employee Responsibilities

All stakeholders, irrespective of their role, have a personal responsibility to comply with this policy, associated policies and to abide by the Equality Act 2010, in dealing with each other
In particular, all stakeholders must not:

- Discriminate against colleagues/peers, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors or any other stakeholders;

- Bully or harass colleagues/peers, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, governors or any other stakeholders

- Encourage or try to encourage another person to treat others unfairly or to practice unlawful discrimination;

- Victimize people who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or who have provided information about such discrimination.

We will not tolerate any of the above behaviours. Where stakeholders commit an act of unjustified or unlawful discrimination, or allow discrimination to occur without taking appropriate action, then they could be liable to a claim being brought against them as an individual, for example at an Employment Tribunal. The employee could also be liable to disciplinary action for breach of the Trust's Code of Conduct, which could result in dismissal.

6. Trust Commitment

As a Trust we will carry out the following activities in order to demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity, and also to fulfil our legal responsibilities.

6a. Employment Policies

We will ensure that our employment policies, practices and associated guidance are fair to all by ensuring that new or changed policies are reviewed with the Equalities Policy at the fore. We will monitor the implementation of these policies to ensure that they remain fair in practice and that barriers to and within employment are removed.

6b. Consultation

We use the CES/ the local education authority, in which the school finds itself in addition to trade unions and professional associations as part of our consultation arrangements and we abide by the outcomes agreed.

6c. Pupil Groups

We will ensure that students are fully engaged in all aspects of the schools' activities:

- Student councils will meet regularly in all school and as a Trust group with representation from all schools, all views will be listened to in an open forum and any actions taken as necessary

- Students have access to appropriate adults including class teachers/form tutors, Year Leaders, pastoral support staff, key stage leaders and safeguarding leads on a daily basis
- All students will be treated individually, based on their intrinsic value and dignity and not on the colour of their skin, gender sex or gender reassignment, sexual orientation, language, ethnic or national origins and nationality (including citizenship); religious belief, disability and/or medical conditions, age; political views

6d. Data Collection

As a Trust we will ensure that data is collated related to performance of groups in public exams and internal assessments so that set interventions can be made by schools to ensure that lack of performance by particular groups are addressed

At a school level there is analysis of prejudice and discrimination related incidents so that interventions can be arranged, monitored and evaluated as part of the Equalities Action Plan for each school.

Trust Leader CPD regularly caters for reflection on aspects of the Equality Act 2010 with staff and School Leaders to reflect on personal unconscious bias.

7a. Monitoring and Evaluation

We review the information about equalities in the policy every three years and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves students, staff, governors and parents and carers.

7b. Disseminating the Policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives are available:

- On the Trust and each school website
- In the staff Code of Practice for each school
- As a hardcopy in each school office to be available by request
- As part of the school/trust induction process for new staff and governors

We ensure that this policy is not a stand-alone but is linked to the Equalities Action Plan and is part of CPD for staff and the assemblies and CPD programme for children and young people.