** ST MICHAEL’S CE BAMFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL EQUALITIES POLICY**

**Mission**

At St Michael’s every child is enveloped in a warm, safe, Christian embrace. We trust in each other and enjoy our educational adventure. Through high expectations, endless encouragement and quality teaching, we believe in and aspire to reaching our full potential in every way. Children move on knowing that with effort, commitment, engagement and self-belief they are ready to spread their wings and fly.

**Introduction**

Our school is inclusive; we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and are committed to ensuring that every member of our community is of equal worth and knows their value.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity and accepting ‘all God’s children’ by tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering respect and positive relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue our drive to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement.

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

Our approach to equality is based on 7 key principles:

1. All people, and in particular our learners, are of equal value.

2. We recognise, respect and value diversity and difference. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers that people might face in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith, and sexual orientation.

3. We actively promote and foster positive attitudes and relationships and challenge discrimination.

4. We foster a shared sense of family, belonging and cohesion. Everyone should know that they are accepted and valued.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff, ensuring that policies and procedures benefit all employees equally, including during recruitment, in providing continuing professional development and through promotion.

6. We have the highest expectations of every child in behaviour and learning so that all know that with effort, commitment, engagement and self-belief they can achieve.

7. We strive continually to raise standards in all subjects for all pupils, making additional provision for our most vulnerable pupils.

**Purpose of the Policy**

The Equality Act 2021 ensures protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics, known as *protected characteristics*. Protected characteristics are: age (for employees), disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual identity and Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees).

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty or ‘general duty’ by:

* Eliminating unlawful discrimination
* Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups
* Fostering good relationships between different groups.

And two ‘specific duties’:

* To publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty and
* To publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how school meets these objectives.

**Links to other policies and documentation**

While this policy is the prime vehicle for promoting equality, information is also included in school improvement plans, self-evaluation reviews and actions, on the website, in school council and other pupil group action planning, and in information for parents.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the recruitment and employment policies reflect this duty.

**What we do to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation:**

* We take account of equality issues in the way we provide education for our pupils including access to facilities and services as well as in relation to admissions, which are fair and transparent, and exclusions which are very rarely used and only ever as a final resort.
* We reasonably adjust for disabled pupils to enhance their participation and reduce the risk of disadvantage that could result from a lack of access.
* Recruitment procedures follow fair recruitment practice
* We actively promote equality and celebrate diversity through collective worship, an inclusive ethos and within the curriculum

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The Behaviour Policy and policies relating to attendance, punctuality and SEND, take full account of equality duties.

Prejudice and prejudice-based bullying is effectively challenged with pre-emptive action to educate children about equality and by using restorative practice when incidents and issues arise.

All bullying incidents are treated seriously.

**What we do to advance equality of opportunity between different groups:**

* We know our children and families very well and formative assessment is effective. We use this information to provide high quality, targeted teaching and learning to meet the needs of every child.
* We identify children with SEND in advance of their arrival and in partnership with parents and other agencies, we put in place support to enable them to achieve well.
* We analyse learning outcomes, attendance data and behaviour frequently to identify and support pupils needing more help and to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is accessible to all.
* Accessibility plans are reviewed every three years.
* We alert to the damaging effect of negative language including homophobic, racist, sexist and other harmful language and we proactively teach about tolerance and mutual respect, different families- same love, celebration of diversity in collective worship, PSHCE, RHE and other curriculum areas.
* We use a range of engaging teaching strategies as part of our proportionate and positive action to support all children, including the most vulnerable, to learn effectively.

**What we do to foster good relations:**

* We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society by celebrating diversity through collective worship and the curriculum, and a wealth of opportunity to develop spirituality, morally, socially and culturally.
* We explicitly teach, using SCARF, Stonewall and other materials, about the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, and challenge these at all levels within our community.
* Our whole school family ethos promotes cohesion, respect and acceptance.
* Child-led collective worship enables children to share their beliefs, culture, thoughts and experiences and subjects including RE provide safe spaces for children to explore diverse beliefs and to communicate their opinions sensitively and respectfully.
* Our History curriculum includes the contribution to the world of a variety of cultures.
* Our school environment promotes positive messages about values, beliefs, diversity and equality through display, worship, visitors and events.

**To evaluate the effectiveness of our approach school leaders:**

* Review relevant feedback from parent and pupil questionnaires and take action where needed
* Encourage pupil groups including School Councillors, Anti-bullying Ambassadors and the Ethos and Worship Team to contribute their views, and the views of their peers, to school development planning.

**Equality Objectives**

We identify and publish equality objectives on a three-year cycle overseen by the Curriculum and Pupil Welfare Committee of the Governing Board. Appendix 1 details our current objectives.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of our school community and visitors to uphold our commitment to meeting our equality duties.

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that school complies with legislation, and that policies and procedures are followed, and action plans implemented appropriately, and delegates the day-to-day oversight, coordination and implementation to the Headteacher.

Each Governing Board Committee keeps relevant aspects of the Equality Duty under review and ensures that other policies are underpinned by equality policy and objectives.

Teaching and support staff promote an inclusive ethos in their classroom, around school and within the local community; challenge prejudice and discrimination; deal fairly and professionally with children and other adults; plan and deliver learning that reflect the school’s principles, promote respect and educate children about equality; and strive for the highest standards of learning for every child.

**Equal opportunities for staff**

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, such that:

* All staff are appointed on the basis of merit and ability in compliance with law
* We aim to reflect the diversity of our school community in staffing and governance
* As an employer we strive to eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce
* We provide appropriate training for all staff.

**Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

The policy is reviewed every three years or earlier should there be any change to law or guidance within that time.

**Disseminating the policy**

The Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives is:

* Published on the school website
* Available on request from the school office
* On the O:drive in current key policies for staff

**Complaints**

Complaints arising relating to this policy or aspect covered by it are dealt with in line with the school complaints procedure.

This policy has been agreed by staff and governors in Autumn 2021 and is due for review in Autumn 2022.

Chair of Governors: Steve Kuncewicz