

Welton St. Mary's Church of England Primary Academy



Our Vision

As an inclusive Christian community we value each person, seeking to release everyone's full potential as promised by Jesus Christ. We seek to provide a safe, inspiring and creative learning environment providing opportunities for all to flourish. Through challenge, support and care, we strive for excellence in all that we do; always building on the foundations of shared values with consistently high expectations rooted in God's love. Together we are encouraged to be agents of positive change in this world.

'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.' Romans 15:13

Wisdom Hope Community Dignity

Equal Opportunities Policy

Approved July 2024

Welton St Mary's CE Primary Academy

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you”

Matthew 7:12

What is ‘Equal Opportunity?’

Equal Opportunities at school is about ensuring that all children and adults have equality of opportunity in terms of access and outcome throughout all aspects of school like and that their life chances for the present and future are not impeded or distorted by anything that happens during their participation in the process of education, but are in fact widened to allow them to achieve the whole scope of their potential. It is important to note that equal access does not necessarily lead to equality of outcome. Equal opportunity recognises and celebrates our similarities and our diversity as individuals and groups. It recognises that all individuals have an intrinsic right to be nurtured in such a way as they are able to reach their full potential. Equal opportunity accepts that while we all have something of value to contribute, we do not all start on a level playing field. Consequently some individuals will be disadvantaged in their attempts to reach their potential. We as a school will work hard to differentiate and maximise their personal achievement.

Issues of equality are applicable to us all, but there are a number of people about whom Equal Opportunity concerns are often more formally expressed. Such groups are often referred to in terms of race, gender, sex and disability or with reference to their age, class, religion or educational achievement. These terms in themselves may be problematic in that they are social constructs (‘man-made’), but they may also have use as frames of reference.

Equal Opportunities covers the whole process of education but particularly embraces issues of multiculturalism, anti-racism, disability, ethnicity, gender and trans-gender, sexuality, and socio economic disadvantage. Strategies to combat inequality include those dealing with issues of self-esteem and sense of self-worth, school organisation, curriculum content and delivery, provision for those considered to have special educational and or English as an additional language needs, underachievement, and building social relationships within the school community.

Equal opportunity is about creating the structures and contexts for unlocking potential. On 1 October 2010 new equality legislation came into force. The Equality Act 2010 has replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act, and Sex Discrimination Act. This means that three equality duties schools are familiar with (Race Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality) have been replaced by a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force on 6 April 2011. Under the PSED, schools must show due regard to the general duty and its three ‘components’ as well as complying with a set of specifications. The three components to the PSED are:

a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act

b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This means that schools are still required to take proactive steps to tackle discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Explicit incidents which contribute to inequality include racism, sexism, classism or any kind of discrimination. Physical violence, verbal abuse, insults, name calling, jokes / ridicule, threats, bullying and graffiti are some of the manifestations of this. Any such undermining of a person's sense of worth or self-esteem is unacceptable. Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy has a legal duty to implement and monitor an Equal Opportunities Policy. We are proud of the work undertaken to ensure all have equal opportunities, enabling everyone to flourish and through working towards achieving our school vision, educate our school community in valuing all, enabling everyone to flourish and for all to be agents of positive change, having the confidence and skills to challenge injustice.

Our School Ethos

Key phrases from our school vision

- **Inclusive** 
- **Value each person** 
- **All to flourish** 
- **Strive for excellence** 
- **Rooted in God's love** 
- **Agents of positive change** 

We recognise that the overall ethos and climate of a school contributes to what our children learn from us in school; that children pick up on the values and expectation we promote. Consequently we use our school ethos and culture as a means to promote equality and self-worth. One example of this is with our behaviour policy and how it is applied.

We will endeavour to maintain and further develop a school ethos which is welcoming, reflective of the diverse multicultural society within the UK, fosters a sense of well-being, confidence and security; that affirms individual identity and demonstrates respect for each other; that ensures time and space for each individual; that challenges and expands horizons and encourages confidence, independence, co-operation and participation.

In order to achieve this, we will:-

- Always challenge in an open and frank manner, behaviour and language which threaten the promotion of equal opportunities and take time to discuss with children the negative and damaging effect it has.

- Take the opportunity to use display space and collective worship time to promote issues of equality, and self esteem.
- Implement praise, reward, criticism and sanctions with due consideration for equality.
- Encourage a climate of openness where children feel safe and confident to raise issues of concern to them, bullying, racism, e – safety, taunting etc., and where the school can place a positive influence on discussion and events.
- Be sensitive to the needs of all individuals; recognizing each in his or her own right, and without placing labels on individuals or groups of children. This includes a commitment to offer time to each individual and ensure that individual or group needs are met.
- Be aware of the power of language as a tool which can promote equality or perpetuate inequality.
- Children, too, need to be made aware of their language use and its implications. In addition they also need to be made aware of their part in promoting positive relationships and the ethos of the school.
- Encourage high aspirations and a skill set for a global citizenship by offering a range of opportunities and experiences to broaden and raise personal expectations as much as possible.

What each child and adult brings from home is important. We are also mindful of what children see and hear on social media and in the news. In promoting equality of opportunity we may be asking children to explore some of these values, attitudes and behaviours.

Resources

Care will be taken with the purchase of new material to ensure resources promote positive images and avoid stereotyping. Please be aware that books which display sexism, negative images or stereotyping may have a planned place in our curriculum as a tool for discussion with the children in order to promote a positive understanding of the surrounding issues. Resources, including books, need to be presented as sources of evidence, which need to be interpreted, questioned and evaluated, rather than authorities which are hardened statements of fact.

Picture News and Newsround are also ways that we promote discussion around issues and equalities.

Our curriculum is constantly under review. Carefully considered decisions have been made with regard to the significant people being studied in history, artists chosen and with the reading spine that we have in school.

Assessment recording and monitoring

All staff share a responsibility for monitoring and effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy and reporting concerns to senior staff. Subject leaders will monitor their subjects to ensure the taught curriculum, resources, assessment procedures and learning outcomes ensure equality of opportunity for the whole school community.

The Headteacher holds specific responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the policy in conjunction with senior staff.

Policy for Sex and Gender Equality

Aims

To ensure no discrimination takes place at Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation.

To create a school community in which men and women, boys and girls from all faiths and cultures are valued equally, while their different backgrounds, experiences and needs are respected.

To establish an ethos of equality, and adopt strategies to achieve equality of opportunity for both sexes.

Rationale

Sexism is the term used to describe discrimination on the basis of gender; where the operation of forces in society, (beliefs, attitudes, behaviours) can allot benefits and privileges, as well as curb and limit preferences and opportunities, on the basis of a person's gender rather than on the basis of inclination or ability.

Sexism and gender stereotyping is offensive and is equally as damaging to boys and girls. Conforming to gender roles can inhibit the abilities, performance and aspirations of both boys and girls by restricting their choices. Our school is committed to sexual equality and seeks to counter sexism and gender/ transgender or sexuality stereotyping in order to extend the choices and horizons of all staff and children so that they can discover who they are, what they like doing and achieve their full potential at whatever they attempt.

In order to achieve this we will employ the following strategies:

- Boys and girls will have access to the full range of educational activities and equal entitlement to all resources.
- Raise awareness amongst the staff of the dangers of gender role stereotyping and of procedures and principles to counter it.
- Encourage all children to extend their horizons and make children aware of all the opportunities available to them.
- Recognise that access itself will not lead to equality: we may need to intervene. For example some girls given the opportunity to build with construction kits may not succeed with them to their full potential unless they are actively taught how to use them – a procedure with which many boys may already be very familiar.
- Monitor the use of school equipment in terms of access, time available and teaching (Research shows that boys demand and receive more of a teacher's time than girls).

- Use positive role models and ensure the achievements and contributions of both men and women throughout history, art, literature and science are incorporated appropriately into the curriculum. It needs to be presented as a natural part of the curriculum and not an appendage.
- Teachers have equally high expectations of both boys and girls.
- Be aware of word use, the power of language and its implications; for example 'policeman' or 'good girl'.
- Use, where appropriate, discussion, drama, role play to explore different roles: empathy and understanding of others.
- Build in activities to the curriculum which challenge limiting assumptions, extend horizons and explore new avenues of thought. For example, write a fairy story with characters who have stepped outside of their stereotyped role; active, strong clever princesses.
- Make equal demands on both sexes, for example during discussion and class questioning.
- Challenge inappropriate stereotypes, sexist comment and inappropriate statements about sex roles: for example 'boys are better at...'
- Ensure school texts and resources do not promote sex stereotyping. We recognise the more than occasional limitations of commercial material and budget limitations but will actively endeavour to purchase material which promotes positive role models for both sexes.
- If stereotyped images or comments do occur in curriculum materials, e.g. fiction books they should be discussed with the children.
- Ensure staff are seen as positive role models.
- Ensure we employ the very best available staff for all roles in school regardless of their gender (or transgender) and / or sexuality.
- Monitor our own practice, beliefs and expectations through self evaluation. Do we expect girls to be more.....?
- Consider carefully, and act on, equality issues in the organisation and management of learning. We recognise that the achievement of equality will be complex and subtle.

Anti-Racist Policy

Aims

- Provide a curriculum which emphasises respect and understanding of all cultures and religions.
- Provide a curriculum which enables children to develop skills to recognise and challenge inequality.
- Ensure a consistent approach to tackle racism in all its forms and manage racist incidents.

Rationale

Racism refers to the consequence of placing social significance in concepts of race which have as their outcome the disadvantage of individuals and groups. Racism may be exhibited in many forms including physical assault, derogatory name calling, verbal abuse, insults, jokes, graffiti, provocative behaviour, (including wearing badges or bringing literature to school,) ridicule of an individual for cultural or religious difference and refusal to co-operate with others because of their ethnic origins. Racism includes all practices and procedures that discriminate against people because of their race, colour, culture, nationality and national or ethnic origins (including religion and language) whether on an individual, institutional or cultural level.

Discrimination is defined as action or behaviour which disadvantages a group of people. Racism can take many forms from direct harassment (e.g. racist name calling or physical bullying) to indirect and institutional racism (e.g. discriminatory admissions criteria and allocation to teaching groups). Racism can occur between any ethnic group. Racism has a long history affecting millions of people. People are seriously harmed and injured by it.

The law recognises the seriousness of racism.

What is a racist incident?

A racist incident is defined as ‘any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person’ (Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report 1999). An incident may have occurred either intentionally or accidentally either overtly or covertly. This definition is deliberately broad.

In the past, racist incidents nationally have been under-reported and this definition ensures that any reported incident has the scope to be investigated, without the potential of the racist dimension disappearing unchallenged. A well-intentioned response may well be to excuse the incident by emphasising the lack of explicit intent. This underplays the feelings of the individual or group on the receiving end and perpetrators must be made aware of the hurt that they have caused and should not be allowed to be empowered at someone else’s expense. The distinctive feature of a racist incident is that a person is attacked not as an individual, but as the representative of a family, community or group. This has potentially harmful consequences not just for the immediate individual, but the wider community.

When an incident perceived to be racist is investigated at a school, the following should be considered:

- ◆ If the pupils alleged to be responsible are known to hold racist views or to engage in racist behaviour, or be part of a friendship group that do
- ◆ If they were wearing outward signs of belonging to a racist culture ◆ If there was no, or only slight, provocation
- ◆ If there is no other explanation for the incident

Whether or not the pupil(s) responsible intended their behaviour to be racist is irrelevant. Of course, when it comes to dealing with an incident, their intentions and attitudes are an important consideration, but at the stage of initial recording and investigating, motivation and awareness are not the main issue.

Racist incidents can involve any of the following:

- ◆ Verbal abuse, threats and name-calling
- ◆ Racist graffiti
- ◆ Racist comments in the course of discussions
- ◆ Physical intimidation
- ◆ Violent attacks because of a person's colour, ethnicity, nationality or religion
- ◆ Incitement of others to behave in a racist way
- ◆ Refusal to co-operate/work with other pupils because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality or religion
- ◆ Ridicule of cultural differences e.g. food, dress, language, names, appearance
- ◆ Racist jokes (including those circulated on mobile phones and via the internet)
- ◆ Damage caused to a person's property
- ◆ Possession/distribution of racist material
- ◆ Wearing racist badges/insignia

In order to work towards the elimination for racism, promote a climate of respect and understanding and prepare children for life in an inter-cultural and increasingly global society, we will employ the following strategies:

- Place value on different ethnic groups, cultures and languages in our multi racial / cultural society, recognising that culture is central to a child's identity and foster these cultures and incorporate them into our learning environment.
- Ensure that each child is valued as an individual.
- Regard bilingualism as an asset.
- Ensure that lack of fluency in English will not be used as an indication of academic potential.
- Give equal status to all ethnic groups and hold appropriately high expectations of all children.
- Foster a climate where children are confident in reporting and discussing racism.
- Ensure our curriculum:
 - Reflects and values cultural diversity and the wide range of social and ethnic groups in society and will allow other cultures to be described in their own terms. This is important in rural Lincolnshire where there is little diversity.
 - Leads to an understanding of other cultures and lifestyles

- Enables children to develop the ability to recognise inequality, prejudice, stereotyping and equip children with the knowledge and skills to challenge them, that is incorporates anti racist teaching strategies.

- Avoids racial or cultural stereotypes.

Those in classical literature that cannot be avoided should be explained to children and contextualised.

As an organisation we should actively counter discrimination, prejudice and inappropriate behaviour and statements by children whenever they occur

Monitoring

Racist incidents will be logged and monitored for patterns of behaviour. Subject leaders will monitor the content of the curriculum to ensure it includes opportunities to address issues of equality and has an inter-cultural and global outlook.

Outcomes

- Staff are confident to deal with racist incidents quickly and sensitively
- Pupils bring racist incidents to the attention of staff
- The curriculum reflects an anti-racist, inter cultural and global outlook
- All pupils are successfully integrated into the life of the school whatever their heritage or background

Responses

Racist incidents must be taken seriously however trivial they may seem in isolation. They are very hurtful and demeaning to the individual, while institutionally they have the potential to negate the validity of the school community. A racist incident should be reported to a senior member of staff and the incident recorded using CPOMs and fully investigated. It will be explained to the perpetrator and the victim that racism is not acceptable. Sanctions will be dealt with in accordance with school behaviour policy involving parents as appropriate. The school reports all racist incidents to parents of the child and the perpetrator and reports to the school governors.

Guidelines

Young children may not understand the full meaning of their words and actions but if they go unchecked they are likely to develop behaviour which is damaging to themselves and others. Even when we feel that a comment or incident is 'harmless' (not intentionally racist), we have a responsibility to intervene and support. If we do not, we effectively condone what has happened. Consequently the school and all its staff will clearly state opposition to such incidents and make it clear that they are unacceptable. We need to reinforce that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unacceptable. Victims, onlookers and the perpetrator will be positively supported. The victim should retain some control over the outcome of the matter. If we deal with incidents, racist or otherwise in isolation nothing will change. Part of our strategy to eliminate incidents must involve

promoting a climate which fosters a sense of self-worth and respect for others as well. We also need to empower children. They must be involved and feel confident that they will be listened to and that any incident will be dealt with. In addition, we need some degree of anti-racist teaching in our curriculum. Hence only the implementation of this policy, as a whole, will significantly work towards the achievement of equality of opportunity.

Monitoring

Racist incidents will be logged on CPOMS Monitoring information will be used to identify patterns of behaviour and develop strategies to overcome them.

Disability

Aims

We are committed to equality of access and opportunity for people with disabilities.

Rationale

Our SENDCO and SLT work closely to provide any equipment, modification to any equipment or the premises which will enable a child with a disability or member of staff to undertake a full education or employment at Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy.

In order to achieve this we will:

- identify and remove any physical and procedural practices which could disadvantage a disabled child.

Regularly review and update our accessibility plan

- Promote understanding of disability as an equality issue.
- Incorporate disability into the curriculum and school life, e.g. collective worships when appropriate.
- Ensure that we speak of disability using language determined by the disabled.
- Promote positive images of disability through school resources.
 - Work to be agents of positive change, raising awareness and understanding beyond our curriculum

Monitoring

- Work to facilitate access for disabled users will be monitored by the Governors
- Subject leaders will monitor their subject curriculum, assessment procedures, resources and learning outcomes to ensure the school presents a positive image of people with disabilities.
- Subject leaders and class teachers will monitor their subject curriculum, assessment procedures and resources to ensure they meet the need of any pupils with disabilities.

Outcomes

- Our school works to ensure equal access to the school site for disabled users.
- The school promotes a positive image of disability.
- Disabled users feel confident, secure and valued when using our site and facilities Equalities Policy – inter-cultural education Aims
- To develop a respect, knowledge and understanding for other cultures, religions and ways of life that are present in our increasingly global society
- To nurture the self-esteem and sense of self of all pupils
- Contribute to pupils understanding of the positive role they have to play to develop a just and fair society
- Combat inequality and discriminatory practices
 - Ultimately to enable our vision to be realised



Rationale

Children need to develop a respect, knowledge and understanding for other cultures, religions and ways of life if they are to play a positive and effective role in our increasingly global society. A knowledge and respect for others goes part way to challenging inequality. Strategies to ensure that an inter-cultural out-look permeates the life of our school.

- Celebrate the diversity of language, culture and religious belief in our school and the wider society
- Celebrate world festivals and note the achievements of people from all cultures around the world
- Purchase of resources will reflect the diverse range of cultures and religions in our society
- Display around the school will celebrate the diversity of cultures around the school
- Recognise the valuable resources our children, parents, staff and community visitors can bring to our inter-cultural education

Monitoring

- Subject leaders will monitor the curriculum, assessment procedures, resources and learning outcomes to ensure the effective intercultural outlook of their subject
- Senior staff will monitor to ensure the wider life of the school

Outcomes

- Children and staff have understanding and respect for the cultures, religions and lifestyle of themselves and others
- All children recognise that their own background and experiences are valued by the school
- Access to the whole curriculum is offered to all pupils, recognising that equality of access does not necessarily result in equal outcomes
- The school community operates on a basis of co-operation and respect and living through our 6 core values.
- Resources reflect the cultural and religious diversity of our school, community and the wider world

Employment and Staff Development

Aims

- To ensure all staff feel valued members of the school community
- To enable all staff to reach their potential
- To support staff in their professional development
- Relationships of the staff to act as role models to the children and their parents

Rationale

Our Equal Opportunities Policy is guided by legislation. We are committed to ensuring that all adults working at and applying for a position at Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy receive full and equal consideration through the whole recruitment process.

In order to achieve this we will:

- Follow guidelines when new recruitment is made
- Ensure all staff are made aware of our equal opportunities policy and are supported when discriminatory situations arise
- Ensure all staff will receive details of professional courses operated by the LA, teaching school hub and local teaching training establishments