



St Cuthbert's
ROMAN CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Single Equality Policy

Drafted August 2021	Next review: August 2024	Statutory/non: Statutory	
Associated documents:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Educational Needs and Disability• Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)• Disciplinary Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Equality Act 2010• SEND Policy		

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1. Executive summary

In developing an equality policy, we have been guided by the following principles:

- that all stakeholders are of equal value
- difference should be recognised and respected
- positive attitudes and relationships should be fostered, resulting in a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- clear evidence of this policy in the practices of staff recruitment, retention and development
- the reduction and eventual removal of pre-existing inequalities and barriers
- wide consultation with, and involvement of, all stakeholders in the formulation of policy
- sound evidence is used as a base for our policy and practices
- objectives pertaining to this policy are specific and measurable over reasonable timescales

With these in mind, and regardless of the numbers of learners, staff, parents and carers, who are within particular groups as described under Section 5.2 below, we will ensure that they are all treated of equal value. Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate, but will take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage that people may face in relation to their choices.

Additionally, we intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote positive attitudes and interactions between people in these groups, leading to mutual respect and good relations between all, and with an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

We are committed to policies and procedures that benefit all employees, current and potential, in recruitment and promotion and their continuing professional development, and will take opportunities to maximise positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of these groups.

We will engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones, consulting and involving, wherever possible, members within these groups.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion between, and encouraging greater participation in public life of, people in these groups.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. To this end, we will regularly review and renew this policy and our overarching statement pertaining to equality across all our organisation, taking into account national and local priorities, and available information as appropriate.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the “Diocesan Protocols for academies within the trusteeship of the Diocese of Middlesbrough” and the “Memorandum of Understanding between the Catholic Church and the Department of Education” – April 2016. These documents give further information about the exemptions that can be applied to ensure the “preservation and development of the Catholic character” of the Trust and its schools.

2. Policy statement

2.1 Introduction

The UK has specific legislation on equality that outlaws discrimination and offers protection and redress to employees and stakeholders, underpinned by core British values, individual freedom, belief in personal responsibility, and mutual respect and fairness.

1.2 This policy describes how St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust is meeting statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how its academies are complying with the Public Sector

Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

3. Scope and purpose

3.1 This policy applies to all stakeholders, students, employees, including volunteers, agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

4. Responsibility for implementing the policy

4.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to colleagues identified within each Academy (see academy appendix for details).

5. Legal duties

5.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into force in April 2011 and extends to protected characteristics – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment. In relation to these groups, it calls for the Trust/School to have a due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This means:

5.1a We will ensure that decision-makers are aware of the PSED duty to have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action and give relevant and proportionate consideration when assessing whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

5.1b We will ensure that equality implications are taken into consideration in developing policies and taking decisions, and are reviewed on a continuing basis.

5.1c We will ensure that the PSED is integrated into all the Trust/School's functions and policies and that the analysis necessary to comply with the duty is carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind.

5.1d The Trust/School cannot delegate responsibility for carrying out the PSED duty to anyone else.

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific protected characteristics. A protected characteristic under the Act covers the groups listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex (including issues of transgender)
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)
- Maternity and pregnancy

6. British values

6.1 Equality and diversity are embodied in the aims published by St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust. All who work in the Trust will aim to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all students and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a world where we value individual liberty, democracy, the law, mutual respect and tolerance. Our students will meet, live and work with people of different cultures, religions, languages and ethnic origins. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all and recognise that preparation for life in a diverse society is relevant to everyone.

6.2 In addition, these British values are also promoted at various times in and across the curriculum throughout the year. The curriculum across St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust is broad and balanced, complies with current legislation, and provides a wide range of subjects to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in Modern Britain. It actively promotes fundamental British values, and extends beyond the classroom via a wide range of visits and experiences, engaging them in extracurricular activity and volunteering in the local community, and promoting tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths, cultures, and lifestyles through effective spiritual, moral social and cultural development. It is supported by a well-rounded programme of assemblies and tutorials which offer clear guidance about the aforementioned values.

7. Aims and objectives

7.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust is committed to equal opportunities and to preventing discrimination, victimisation, and harassment. In particular:

- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent or any other stakeholder shall suffer discrimination on the grounds of their sex, race, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability. (Discrimination)
- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent or any other stakeholder will be treated less favourably because of exercising his or her statutory rights. (Victimisation)
- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent or any other stakeholder will be subjected to unwanted, unwelcome, upsetting or embarrassing behaviours based on their sex, race, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability. (Harassment)
- it is the responsibility of all staff, students, and directors at every level of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust to adhere to this Equal Opportunities Policy and to ensure it is effective
- St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will provide a friendly and secure atmosphere for all students and staff
- every student should have the opportunity for full involvement in school activities
- the contributions of all members of the school, students, teaching and support staff should be valued and respected
- no form of harassment, whether religious, racial, sexual or any other sort will be accepted
- St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will show due regard for the principles of equal opportunities in the selection, promotion, deployment and training of staff
- resources should be free of inappropriate stereotypes, and, where appropriate, selected with a view to promoting the ethos of equal opportunities and to reflect the pluralism of society
- all students should have equal opportunity to study any area of the curriculum to the level that best suits their ability and should be encouraged to take a full and active part in lessons
- the whole curriculum should take account of the issues of equal opportunities

7.2 To achieve our aims we will:

- publish and share our policy with all stakeholders of the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust community to show compliance with the Equality Duty
- reinforce our ethos of the value we place upon equality and diversity
- analyse appropriate data to ensure compliance with legislation
- challenge inappropriate behaviour that does not fulfil any equality commitment.

7.3 Success criteria

- students are aware of the impact of prejudice and understand their responsibility to prevent it
- staff are aware of the Single Equality Policy
- data is collated and analysed to monitor equality
- incidents are logged and reported
- St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust Equality objectives are regularly reviewed and re-published, ensuring they are specific and measurable

8. Roles and responsibility

8.1 Promoting equality is the responsibility of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust and its stakeholders.

8.2 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust is responsible for ensuring that legislation relevant to this policy is complied with, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

8.3 The Headteacher/Head of School in each academy within the Trust is responsible for the implementation of this policy, ensuring that:

- all staff are aware of their responsibilities
- all staff are given appropriate training and support
- appropriate action is taken in cases of unlawful discrimination

8.4 Each academy within the Trust will:

- have day to day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy, providing regular reports on its progress and any significant incidents
- ensure the principles within this policy are embedded, integral to, and encompassed within all other policies at each academy
- ensure effectiveness of the policy by being involved in the review each time it is reviewed
- review the academy response to all allegations of inequality with regard to any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010

8.5 All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in and around the academy
- deal with, and report, any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricular lessons that reflect the objectives in paragraph 6
- support students for whom English represents an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

8.6 Students are expected to:

- treat each other with respect and courtesy
- explore and value diversity with a healthy and positive approach
- speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour, or feel that they have been treated unfairly

9. Information and resources

9.1 We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all employees and Trustees of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust and, as appropriate, to all students and their parents and carers.

9.2 All employees and directors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

10. Religious observance

10.1 We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all employees, students and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

11. Staff development and training

11.1 We ensure that all St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust employees, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as cohorts.

12. Record keeping

12.1 Detailed records will be made to include decisions, action taken and the reasons for these. All records will be retained securely as mentioned above. Whilst we acknowledge that such allegations (as all others) may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge that they may be founded. It is therefore essential that all allegations be investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures. The following definitions will be used to determine the outcome of any alleged allegation:

- Substantiated: sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- False: sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- Unfounded: no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegations being made.

13. Supporting those involved

13.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust has a duty of care to its employees and will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The investigating officer will appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual e.g. contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support, access to welfare counselling or medical advice. St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will deal with any allegation of abuse made against a teacher, other member of staff, or volunteer, in a quick, fair and consistent way in order to minimise the stress inherent in the situation, thus providing effective protection for the child, whilst simultaneously supporting the subject of the allegation.

14. Confidentiality

14.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a student from the same academy (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). The reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State or the Teaching Regulation Agency for England publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation.

15. Monitoring and evaluation

15.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust collects, studies and uses quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and may adjust it, as appropriate.

15.2 In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin/status, and gender.

15.3 Notwithstanding the above, the Trust recognises its obligations, protected in law, to preserve and develop the Catholic character of its schools as set out in the following documents:

- Articles of Association
- Scheme of Delegation
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Catholic Church and the Department of Education

16. Review of the policy

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Trust, which will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively and continues to comply with our duties in law.