



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

educate protect love serve

Single Equality Scheme

2021-2024

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Forward

Our school supports Cornwall Council aims to be recognised as a leader of diversity and equality in its work and as an example of good practice in delivery of services and employment. This Scheme for Cornwall's schools reflects this ambition and the activities which will deliver this.

Equality of opportunity and social inclusion issues will ensure that all communities and organisations can truly benefit from and contribute to the improvements we are making, which are bringing long-term and positive benefits for Cornwall.

Success of the school's Single Equality Scheme will require ownership by: The Board of directors; Governors; Senior leaders; all staff; the school community and the young learners.

The Cornwall School's Single Equality Scheme (CSSES) serves essentially two purposes:

1. To set out a school's overall commitment to equality and diversity in one central document. The CSSES therefore contains:

- the school's approach to all six Equality Strands: race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability, age and gender (including transgender), and
- how the school will manage, plan and include its equality and diversity policy within its day to day work.

2. To act as the 'umbrella' document for both our statutory and non-statutory equality schemes. The CSSES therefore contains:

- the school's statutory equality schemes in relation to race, disability and gender
- the school's non-statutory schemes in relation to sexual orientation, religion/belief and age.

The CSSES will help school's to ensure that they focus more on the outcomes that matter to the community and people who use their services; and that their services are more accessible and delivered effectively.

The CSSES incorporates information, issues and potential areas for action in relation to sexual orientation, age and religion/belief. While there is no legal requirement to develop 'schemes' in these areas, broadening the approach to all six recognised equality strands illustrates their commitment to ensuring equality for all.

1. Introduction

In the implementation of this Scheme we have moved from a focus on an individual response to an approach that builds on race, disability and gender considerations from the start and at every level of the school, at strategic, policy, management and classroom level. We need to be able to demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. This scheme will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, School Improvement and Self Evaluation process.

We will ensure that every pupil irrespective of race, disability, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that every pupil has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We will ensure that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that the adults working or volunteering in the school include as much as possible a balanced gender mix, appropriate representation of diverse ethnic groups and disabled people. We believe that this will provide good role models for pupils from all backgrounds.

We will involve pupils, staff, parents, carers, directors, governors and all other stakeholders in the development of our Scheme. They need to be involved from the very start and their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of the Scheme. The aim is to ensure that we meet the needs of people from different ethnic backgrounds, boys and girls, and children and adults with disabilities.

Our Vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity

- The school's vision for all students is to promote 'Excellence and Equality for All', regardless of age, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.

Section 2 - School profile and values

Our school context:

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is located in the town of Bodmin.

Our school community comes mainly from the various locations within Bodmin and further afield. 80% of our pupils live in the 20% most deprived area of England.

This area is home to diverse ethnic minority communities as well as British White groups.

- Our staff (at September 2017) includes a cross section of the local community, including staff with 5 decades of age variation. No disabled staff. Cornish and White British majority. 93% female and 7% male. 5% have English as an additional language
- Our Governing Body (at September 2021) includes a cross section of the local community, representative of the majority with diversity of age spanning 5 decades. The majority of the governors are Foundation governors, representing the church. The Priest in Charge is also a member of the governing body. Governors have a clear awareness of the composition of the local society which we serve.

We are committed to

- Tackling race, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief and age discrimination.
- Positively promoting race, disability and gender equality
- Creating good relationships in the school with all groups by race, culture, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief and age.
- Promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Roles and responsibilities, commitment and accountability

The CSSES will mainstream equality issues by:

- Integrating equality issues into all our key policies, service planning arrangements and performance management framework;
- Ensuring that the School's short, medium and long term planning contributes towards this scheme;
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to monitor and report on our progress against our action plans as well as our progress on integrating equality issues; and
- Ensuring that we engage effectively with stakeholders and local communities in delivering and monitoring the scheme.

Section 3 - The Race Duty and Community Cohesion

Race

The School recognises that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic [BAME] people experience discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality, religion and ethnic origin.

The School will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist BAME people to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their education.

The School is committed to working for the equality of all ethnic groups and the Governing Body understands its accountability.

Under the duty in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote racial equality we will:

1. Tackle unlawful discrimination by

- Keeping accurate records of all ethnic and faith groups, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them;
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily according to Local Authority Guidance, *Guidelines for Challenging and Dealing with Racial Harassment in Schools* and notify complainants of the outcomes and action taken;
- Encouraging dialogue between different racial groups on the appropriateness of our service offer;
- Prevent racial discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups.

2. Support cohesion by

- Promoting activities that celebrate our common experience as well as those that recognise diversity generally and foster understanding and respect for the culture and faith of all our learners and their families;
- Encouraging learners and their families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life;
- Using our support for the voluntary and community sector to promote good race relations;
- Countering myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations;

3. Work in partnership with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals and groups to

- Include the active participation of minority communities in shaping the future of our school.
- Ensure the school staff understand the principles of good race relations.
- Ensure the policy is also part of our planning

We have developed a Race Equality Plan which will be annually monitored, evaluated and used as a basis for developing future plans.

Community Cohesion

From September 2007 we understand our duty to Promote Community Cohesion as part of the response to the duties contained in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Our school already considers this to be a fundamental part of our role.

We understand that Community Cohesion is the process that should happen in all communities to ensure that different groups and individual people get on well together. It should also allow for new residents and existing residents to adapt to one another.

We set out to -

- Build on the work we are already undertaking, creating a sense of shared values.
- Develop an understanding in children that they all have a responsibility to their shared future.
- Emphasise mutual respect and honesty between different groups including children and teachers.
- Through the curriculum and all school activities, we emphasise the necessity of fairness and trust.

We will evidence our effectiveness for OFSTED by demonstrating:

- A widely shared sense of the contribution of different communities to a shared vision.
- A strong sense of individual rights and responsibilities within the school community.
- That all children and parents feel they are being treated fairly and have the same opportunities.
- That children trust the school to act fairly.
- We have strong and positive relationships.

Section 4 - The Disability Equality Duties

Disability

The School's commitment to disabled learners, their families and staff's equality has four objectives:

We will promote equality for disabled people by:

- Removing barriers to accessibility, particularly in relation to education, employment and access to services, information and buildings;
- Encouraging good practice by our partners through our advisory capacity;
- Upholding the Social Model and our guiding principles in our role in procurement and in our partnership duties.

We will tackle discrimination against disabled people by:

- Promoting positive images of disabled people;
- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes;
- Making the environment as safe as possible for and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of, disabled learners, staff and families.

We will support disabled learners to achieve their full potential by:

- Providing where possible, support, assistance and care to disabled learners to enable them to lead independent lives;
- Supporting the formation of groups, networks and services for disabled learners and disabled employees of the school and people who are disabled in the community;
- Supporting disabled learners, staff and carers according to their individual need.

We will work in partnership with disabled learners and their carers and staff by:

- Enabling disabled learners, their families and disabled staff active participation;
- Involving disabled learners, their families and disabled staff in the changes and improvements we make;
- Consulting with disabled learners, their families and disabled staff on issues affecting them rather than with people acting on their behalf.

When carrying out our functions, we will have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
- Eliminate disability related harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation of disabled people in public life.
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
- Monitor staff and learners by disability.

We plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils by:

- Maximising the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the school curriculum.
- Positive images of disabled people across the curriculum.
- Where possible, improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled learners can take advantage of education and associated services.

- Our School's Accessibility Plan has been largely carried out. Works have included an updated medical room.
- Disabled children with care professionals have had input to all of our school DDA schemes.
- Increase access to education for disabled learners is dealt with reactively in our small school. Equal opportunities for disabled employees and other school users are planned for on a needs basis.

Section 5 - The Gender Equality Duties

Our School is committed to combating sex discrimination and sexism and promoting the equality of women and men.

The School is aware that staff with caring and domestic responsibilities may need to work part-time or flexible working hours.

We will work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexual harassment, domestic violence and other hate crimes.

The School is also committed to ensuring the rights, under the Gender Recognition Act 2005, of transgender people (who have Gender Recognition Certificates).

We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.

Information relating to gender is available through school information contained in SIMS as well as a variety of school based tracking systems.

We have developed a Gender Equality Plan which will be annually monitored, evaluated and used as a basis for developing future plans.

Section 6 - Religion and Belief

Our School recognises that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong.

Our School also recognises that a person's religious (or similar) beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility.

We are committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and exclusion on the basis of religion or belief.

Our school recognises the need to consider the actions outlined by the Equality Act 2006 (Religion & Belief) which requires us to assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures have on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief and non-belief.

Section 7 - Sexual Orientation

The School is committed to combating discrimination faced by lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge.

Our school recognises the need to protect learners from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007. We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Section 8 Age

The School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We recognise that society has negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people. These attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large.

Age equality means securing the equal participation in society of people of every age, securing a balance between equal citizenship, equality of opportunity, equality of outcome and respect for difference

Section 9 - Anti-bullying and Discriminatory Policy Framework

We at the school hope we represent all of our community in considering that all genuine forms of bullying and discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We have set out the measures that our school will take to address bullying and discriminatory incidents in our Anti-Bullying Policy. We submit data regarding bullying and discriminatory incidents to the Children, Schools and Families Service.

- Our Anti-Bullying policy will be reviewed in line with Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Safeguarding Children Board Anti-Bullying and Discriminatory Policy Framework.
- Staff will receive training in relation to bullying and discriminatory incidents relating to homophobia, racism, disability harassment, sexual and gender bullying, and religious harassment.
- We record all incidents and reporting as required to the Anti Bullying Cornwall Consortium
- We are committed to the investigation of all bullying and discriminatory incidents to prevent re-occurrence.
- We report racist bullying and homophobic discriminatory incident to Cornwall's Children, Schools and Families department.

Section 10 - Employment Practices

At St Mary's School (and through Plymouth CAST) we ensure that we observe the principles of equal opportunities in how we employ, develop and treat our staff.

Equal Opportunities good practice principles are applied to:

- Arrangements for recruitment and selection
- Selection process that is used
- Arrangements for training and developing staff
- Performance appraisal systems

In the event of issue, we monitor, record and take action on:

- Grievance
- Disciplinary issues
- Harassment
- Discrimination

Section 11 - Equality Impact Assessments

We are reviewing key policies, functions or procedures that have been assessed as relevant to meeting the duties set out under race, gender, disability and religion or belief legislation. In line with best practice we will also assess the impact of our key policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality.

The main system by which we will assess the impact of our current policies, functions or procedures will be through carrying out Equality Impact Assessments.

We need to understand whether our policies and services are meeting everyone's needs and that anyone who needs to can get access to them. To do this we undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to test how we are doing at the moment and what can be done better in the future. An EIA is a way of deciding whether a policy or service has a "positive, negative or neutral impact" on some sections of society. It can also be used to test future policies or services. The impacts enable us to take into account the needs of women or men, Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups, disabled people, people's religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. We follow the Council guidance and staff and Governors who are responsible for carrying out these assessments have attended relevant training.

Current policies and practices on disabled pupils and staff and parents /carers boys and girls, men and women; and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

- Admissions and Transfer
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Curriculum
- Uniform
- National Healthy School Status
- Behaviour
- Physical Education
- Anti-bullying, harassment and Discriminatory policy
- Domestic Violence and pastoral support

Section 12 - Consultation and Information

We have involved the following - pupils, staff, parents and governors in the preparation of the scheme.

- Specific guidance from the Senior Building Surveyor, Occupational Therapy and CAST and Cornwall LA was taken to achieve our disability objectives as well as age.
- Specialised, expert advice has been sought where and when required to overcome specific difficulties. This has been provided by the LA, DB of E, health agencies, Scope, Barnardo's, Dreadnought Agency, Child Paediatrics and many others.
- Language and communication, barriers have been addressed with the help of the LA, EAL Unit and through our links with the Children's Centre
- Dialogue and good advanced planning have maintained good working relationships between the school and disabled pupils, staff and parents.

Section 13 - Equality Scheme Objectives

This section sets out the objectives we have identified in order to eliminate discrimination and harassment and promotion of equality in relation to gender, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Gender

Track pupil progress by cohort, SEN, FSM and gender.

Track attendance by gender.

Continue to use male role models across school life – not just PE.

Continue to screen policies and practices for gender equality and revise where necessary.

Continue to deliver learning, appropriate to possible gender related learning styles.

Continue to encourage fathers/male carers can participate in their children's education.

Race

To use positive images of different children/people throughout the world.

Use a programme of staff development.

Disability

Maintain access to the curriculum for all pupils.

Maintain access to after school activities for all pupils.

Religion or belief

Continue to encourage children to take part in a range of multi cultural activities, inviting parents to also share these with the children.

Sex

Through PSHE / SRE lessons look at issues faced by children and adults in today's society linked to sexual

stereotyping and harassment (age appropriate)
Continue to develop school policy to changes by government and LA with regard to national retirement age.

Section 14 - Roles and responsibilities

The Governing body accepts their responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment, as outlined in the scheme.

Governors will monitor the Schools Equalities Scheme.

Section 15 - Contracting and Procurement

This is carried out with an eye to 'Best Value' requirements with no influence taken from race, gender or disability.

Section 16 - Action Plan

Our action plan shows explicit objectives for race, disability and gender issues and also objectives for religion or belief and sexual orientation with:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- An indication of expected outcomes or performance criteria
- Agree indicators of progress towards the objectives
- Clear timescales
- A specified date and process for review
- How the action plan will be incorporated into a framework that has the oversight of a governing body, so that progress is checked.

See schemes as set out in Appendix A

Section 17 - Reporting and reviewing the scheme

In line with the requirements of the Scheme we will produce an annual report on progress and review and revise the Schools Equality Scheme every three years.

In line with requirements we will report-

- How we conduct regular review of progress against our equality objectives.
- Who is responsible for monitoring the Schools' Equality Scheme

Section 18 - Publication

The Schools Equality Scheme is published as a separate document and is available on request as a hard copy from the office, for viewing within the policies folder in the office or on our website.

Section 19 - Complaints

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the Council because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class, they should report this without fail through the School's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance or Dignity at Work Policies, as appropriate.

We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour. Complaints about staff will be investigated using the appropriate Local Authority Procedures.

Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report annually on complaints made and action taken as part of monitoring the CSES.

Date to be reviewed September 2024