

Section 3.6 Equal Opportunities Policy

[this policy has been recently reviewed and is pending approval by governors]

Rationale

St Saviour's & St Olave's School, whose ethics are based on Christian teaching, is proud of its culturally and socially diverse community and is committed through its aims to ensure equality of opportunity for all of its members. Everyone in our school community, in whatever capacity each serves, is important and is therefore deserving of courtesy, consideration and respect.

All members of our school community will be appreciated and valued regardless of ability, age, class, colour, ethnic origin, gender, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or social conditions. We welcome our Christian duty to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

The school will strive to ensure that nobody is discriminated against, belittled, or humiliated by words, actions or expressions. All members of this school should have access to opportunities which should enable them to reach their full potential. This policy is designed to fulfill our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 towards the nine groups of protected characteristics in our school community.

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1. Context

Characteristics of St Saviour's and St Olave's School

St Saviour's & St Olave's School is situated in the northern end of the London Borough of Southwark. It draws its students from a relatively large catchment. St Saviour's and St Olave's is a comprehensive school smaller than the average size; the October 2018 census shows 756 students on roll.

Most students come from black heritage backgrounds. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups is large. When students start at the school, their attainment is broadly above national average; this is evidenced by the data provided from KS2 tests.

The most recent available DfE data establishes that:

- The school is smaller than other secondary schools nationally
- The absence rate is below the national average
- Persistent absence is also well below the national average
- 46.9% of students are eligible for Free School Meals compared to a national average of 29.1%
- 29.6% of students have a first language that is not English compared to 16.1% nationally
- 9.5% of students require some form of SEN support

2. Objectives

We aim to:

- Encourage students to be open-minded and challenge prejudice.
- To help students to develop their self-esteem and to recognise that they are each valued as individuals through actively encouraging their access to the full curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- To demonstrate that students are respected as individuals.
- To help each student to achieve their full potential.
- To enable students to contribute actively to the process of education by bringing their cultural experiences, values and perspectives to it.
- Be sensitive about equal opportunities issues in the selection of teaching materials and be aware of images and text, which may stereotype or denigrate groups or individuals.
- Ensure that St Saviour's and St Olave's School is an equal opportunities employer so that staff members feel valued, supported and have appropriate advice and encouragement for Professional Development.
- Ensure that St Saviour's and St Olave's School does not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise any employee or student.
- To use our resources to help those who need additional help to overcome barriers.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Treating all those within the whole school community (e.g. students, staff, governors, parents and community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experiences.
- Securing the school's Christian ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices

- Encouraging everyone within our school community to gain a positive self- image and high self-esteem.
- Having high expectations of everyone involved with the whole school.
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing others' similarities and differences and facing equality and diversity issues openly.
- Striving to identify and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory directly or indirectly and replacing them with practices which are fair to all.
- Monitoring and reviewing all of the above to seek to secure continuous improvement.

3. Definitions

The Equality Act (2010) makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a student, prospective student or staff member by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination – for example if a school were to refuse to let a pupil be a prefect because she is a lesbian.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. An example might be holding a parents’ meeting on a Friday evening, which could make it difficult for observant Jewish parents to attend. It is a defence against a claim of indirect discrimination if it can be shown to be “a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. This means both that the reason for the rule or practice is legitimate, and that it could not reasonably be achieved in a different way.

Harassment is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a protected act.”) A protected act might involve, for example, allegation of discrimination making an or bringing a case under the Equality Act, or supporting another person’s complaint by giving evidence or information, but it includes anything that is done under or in connection with the Act. Even if what a person did or said was incorrect or misconceived, for example based on a misunderstanding of the situation or of what the law provides, they are protected against retaliation unless they were acting in bad faith. The reason for this is to ensure that people are not afraid to raise genuine concerns about discrimination because of fear of retaliation.

4. Areas for Implementation

School Ethos

This policy reflects the Christian ethos of the school and is linked to all the school’s policies. Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is kept informed about this equality policy and abides by it. The policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.

Achievement and Progress of Students

Students’ attainment and progress in individual subjects are monitored by groups e.g. ethnicity, gender, gifted and talented, those students for whom English is an Additional Language and those students with SEN. The school develops strategies for tackling differences in the attainment and progress of groups. The school values and celebrates the achievements and progress of students from all groups. All students have equal access to extra-curricular activities. Students are offered the support, challenge and guidance they need. Staff challenge racism and stereotyping and promote racial and gender equality in education, employment, training and career choice.

The Curriculum and Teaching and Learning

The whole school curriculum should be free from discrimination. Positive images of all groups must be promoted and continually developed throughout the school. Every effort should be made to ensure that all materials used in school reflect the aims of the policy statement.

Assessment outcomes are used to: identify the specific needs of all students; inform policies, planning and the allocation of resources. Teaching methods and styles take account of the needs of all girls, including those from different ethnic groups, those that are gifted and talented and students with SEN; and encourage positive attitudes to ethnic difference, cultural diversity and racial equality. The school takes active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of the curriculum are inclusive.

Teaching Groups

All teaching groups are arranged to reflect the cultural and social diversity of our community.

Members of Staff

Staff who are appointed to the school are required to adhere to the aims set out in this policy. The school is committed to recruiting high quality staff who reflect the cultural and social make-up of the community that it serves as a means of providing positive role models. The Headteacher

should ensure that in recruitment procedures any advertisements, shortlisting and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. In staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria as laid down in the job description.

Recruitment and selection procedures are consistent with the statutory Race Relations Code of Practice in Employment and other Equality legislation and the Equality Act 2010. Proactive steps are taken to identify, support and provide opportunities for the professional development of staff from all ethnic groups. The school strives to ensure that redundancy policies avoid any form of discrimination.

Parents, governors and community partnership

Parents are welcome and respected in school. People from minority ethnic communities are able to become school governors. Governors will be encouraged to play an active role in the life of the school in order to fulfil their monitoring duties. The school seeks to support all governors in performing their role, for example, through school induction procedures for new governors. All parents are regularly informed of their child's progress. The school's premises and facilities are equally available for use by all groups. The school enables community groups to use its facilities for after school activities and for holiday schemes.

Pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusion

The school's procedures for managing behaviour and disciplining students are fair and applied equally to all students, irrespective of ethnicity. The process of excluding a pupil is fair and equitable to all students. Strategies to reintegrate long-term truants and excluded students address the needs of students from all ethnic groups.

Admissions and transfer procedures

This school will take active steps to ensure that the admission process is fair and equitable to students from all groups. The school monitors students' attendance for all groups and uses the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance. Provision is made for students to take time off for religious observance, through leave of absence and authorised absence.

Departmental Policies

Departmental policies should reflect the stated aims, and give teachers guidance to carry them out in each particular subject.

5. Expectations for each protected characteristic

5.1 Gender, Pregnancy and Maternity

As a girls' school, we recognise the importance of encouraging students to have a wide view of the role of women in society. We aim to promote an atmosphere where all students are able to develop their potential, overcome stereotyping and widen their aspirations. To this end we encourage the use of positive images of women in teaching materials and resources, and we present to students the widest possibilities for their future.

The school will ensure that:

- All staff and students have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at St Saviour's and St Olave's as appropriate (We have a statutory duty to promote gender equality – Ch. 5, Equality Act 2010);
- Teaching and associate staff are aware that gender stereotyping may influence their expectations and attitudes. Teaching ethos and curriculum organisation should actively encourage students to make choices based on their preferences. Staff should act as positive role models.
- The school make reasonable adjustments to respond to the needs of a pregnant student or one who is a mother.

5.2 Sexuality & Gender Reassignment

St Saviour's and St Olave's will make sure that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual students and staff, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, where this is known, are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other students or staff. No practices which could result in unfair, less favourable treatment of such students and staff will be accepted. As part of its proactive approach, the school is committed to challenging homophobic bullying, language and stereotypes within the school through RE, PSHE, Assemblies and our Thought for the Day. In doing this, we will continually aim to raise staff and student awareness of their rights and the rights of others.

Gender reassignment is defined as applying to anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes. St Saviour's and St Olave's School will not treat students and staff less favourably because of their gender reassignment.

5.3 Disability

Disability is defined as: when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

The law on disability discrimination protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that schools are allowed to treat disabled students and staff more favourably than non-disabled students and staff, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with those without disabilities.

The overriding principle of equality legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions relating to disability discrimination are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and may have to make changes to your practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what you offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

All staff will be aware of the specific individual needs of students with disabilities and will provide appropriate support. We would aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and participate fully in school life. Equally, where disabilities are not visible, people are not forced to disclose their disability against their wishes, but are fully supported.

School access will be appropriate for all students, staff, parents and visitors.

5.4 Race

There are many ethnic groups but only one human race. The school will seek to make children aware of the value of our multi-cultural society and encourage them to live together in a spirit of tolerance and cooperation. The school Statement on Anti-Racism (see Appendix 3) is drawn to the attention of all members of the school community.

The Race Relations Act 1976 (its amendment in 2000) and the Equality Act 2010, defines racial discrimination as discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins.

Appropriate action will be taken in line with our Behaviour Management systems and Anti-Bullying Policy in dealing with any incident of physical or verbal threats, abuse or harassment of individuals or groups related to their religion, race, language, ability/disability, sexuality age or gender.

This equalities policy has been developed with reference to the Human Rights Act and the Disability Acts.

This policy, sets out our commitment to tackling racial discrimination and promoting equality and good race relations, and explains what this means for the whole school community.

This school will promote race equality and oppose racism in all its forms and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

5.5 Religion or Belief

We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith whilst others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote a distinctly Christian ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

With regard to the teaching of RE we consider that the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We do not seek to make students religious, but to teach them about religion.

5.6 Vulnerable groups

Teaching and associate staff are aware of how vulnerability e.g. a student in care may influence their expectations and attitudes and should therefore adjust their behaviour accordingly.

All students, including students from vulnerable groups should have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at St Saviour's and St Olave's as appropriate.

6. Monitoring

Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the equality policy is undertaken in the following ways:

- All reports of racism are logged.
- Student achievement is analysed for different groups (including gender, SEND, ethnicity) and steps are taken to ensure the achievement of all students is tracked and monitored irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, and sexual orientation where known.

- Recruitment processes are monitored in terms of recording equality and diversity information, details about applicants and appointments through the 'Equal Opportunities' section of the application form and recruitment recording forms. Any changes to policy and procedure or strategy will be assessed for impact on equality and diversity.

7. Complaints Procedure

If anyone in the school feels that this policy is not being followed, then they should raise the matter with their personal line manager, and if necessary the Headteacher. If there is a formal complaint then the school's complaints procedure will be used.

8. Review

St Saviour's and St Olave's School monitors the impact of its policies and procedures on different groups and the effectiveness of such policies are assessed through our self-evaluation procedures. The outcomes of monitoring, pupil behaviour, and exclusion data are analysed at least annually by the school's Leadership Team and the effectiveness of the policy is reviewed.

Appendix 1 – Procedures for dealing with specific offences

All the incidents listed below must be reported immediately and recorded in writing by the witnesses: member(s) of staff and/ or student(s). The member of staff should use the purple Incident Record. The account needs to be as explicit and accurate as possible. All information must be shared with the relevant staff as soon as it is practical to do so.

List of Offences

1. Derogatory name-calling, insults and racist or other offensive jokes.
2. Racist or derogatory comment in the course of discussions and lessons.
3. Racist graffiti, or any other written insult.
4. Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia.
5. Bringing racist, or any other offensive material into school; or encouraging others to join in racist organisations and groups.
6. Making threats against a person or group.
7. Physical Assault.

Dealing with these offences

In all cases care must be taken to aid and support the person offended against, as well as dealing with the offender.

Incidents which have an effect upon the wider school community should be dealt with:

- a) in small groups such as forms, or year assemblies.
 - b) through curriculum input and whole school assemblies where appropriate.
1. Derogatory name-calling, insults and racist or other offensive jokes
 - a). This should be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who witnesses the incident.
 - b). The parties involved should be referred to the Director of Learning for further discussion. Parents or carers may be informed. The incident must be recorded in a central register.
 - c). If discussion with the student is effective then the incident can be closed.
 - d). If discussion with the student is not effective then the matter should be referred to the Deputy Headteachers, and parents or carers will be informed.
 - e). The Form Tutor(s) of the students involved should be informed of the incident.

2. Racist or derogatory comment in the course of discussions and lessons

a) Deal with the comment immediately and inform the Director of Learning, Head of Department and the Form Tutor. The incident must be recorded in a central register.

b) Encourage further discussion amongst those most closely involved, either inside or outside the classroom, dependent upon the circumstances.

c) The Director of Learning is to ensure contact is made with the parents or carers if the matter cannot be resolved.

d) The Director of Learning is to work with the individual(s) to resolve the situation.

3. Racist graffiti, or any other written insult

a) Notify the Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support; the writing style of the offender may be identified.

b) Eradicate the graffiti immediately.

c) If the identity of the offender is discovered the Director of Learning will notify the Form Tutor. The incident must be recorded in a central register.

d) The Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support will discuss the incident with the offender, and the reasons why the writing is offensive.

e) The Director of Learning or Deputy Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support will contact the parents or carers.

f) If the individual re-offends then the matter will be referred to the Deputy Headteacher.

4. Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia

a) No offensive badges should be worn. If a student is wearing an offensive badge ask her to remove it, and refer the student to the Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support.

b) The Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support will discuss the matter with the student.

c) The Form Tutor is to be informed. The incident must be recorded in a central register.

d) If the incident re-occurs with the same student then the matter will be referred to the Deputy Headteacher.

5. Bringing racist or any other offensive material into school, or encouraging others to join in racist organisations and groups

a) Remove the literature and send the pupil directly to the Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support.

b) Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support should explain carefully why the

material is offensive (this could also involve the person responsible for discovering the literature).

c) The Director of Learning or Inclusion Officer – Pastoral Support is to contact the home to explain the incident. The incident must be recorded in the central register.

d) Further action will be taken as appropriate.

e) When the incident has been dealt with, all such offensive material will be destroyed.

6. Making threats against a person or group

This should be dealt with in accordance with the current school policy on behaviour.

7. Physical Assault

The school policy on physical assault should be followed.

Line of Responsibility in Dealing with Offences

The established line of responsibility for dealing with these or any other offences against the spirit of this policy will normally be:

a) the member of staff in whose presence the incident took place.

b) discussion with the appropriate Director of Learning.

c) Form Tutors of the students should be informed of the incident.

d) further referral to the appropriate Deputy Headteacher or senior members of staff, through whom letters home should be sent.

e) the Head Teacher to be informed of the incident.

Appendix 2 – Statement of Anti-Racism

This School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School and as such is founded upon the Christian faith. Through its corporate life it attempts to glorify God in the development of the full human potential in each person.

Its ethos of love and care is the foundation of its aims in educating its pupils to make their proper contribution to society.

Being a Church of England School, we give priority in our admissions policy to children from Christian families, but once the pupils are members of the School it is our policy to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, colour or creed.

The School will seek to make children aware of the value of our multi-cultural society and encourage them to live together in a spirit of tolerance and cooperation. There are many ethnic groups, but only one human race.

This School will continue to re-appraise and develop its curriculum. It will positively root out curriculum material which is degrading and will actively seek material which gives a more representative view of the community.

It will not use literature which is biased and dependent upon stereotypes of any ethnic groups unless adequate background information is provided to ensure an essential sense of context, nor will it allow the distribution of racist literature or pamphlets.

It will seek to meet the needs of its pupils so that it might provide the most suitable environment in which children may achieve their full potential intellectually, emotionally, physically, morally and spiritually.

This School will not tolerate name-calling, ethnic 'jokes', generalisations about ethnic groups, insulting remarks, racist graffiti, undue pressure against individuals, bullying and other such offences.

For any racist offences, those responsible will be made aware of the School's opposition to racism and reasons will be given. Consistency in handling such offences is essential.

This School is aware of the need to keep its anti-racism policy under review and to maintain a critical openness to all aspects of its work. This School values and celebrates the richness of its multi-cultural intake.

Appendix 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

All Teaching and Support Staff

All staff are responsible for upholding and promoting the School Code of Conduct and for promoting equality and raising the achievement of all students.

Governors

The Governing Body of the school has agreed this policy and will review it annually. The Governing Body will receive progress reports from the Headteacher and other school staff on a termly basis, as part of the Headteacher's report to Governors.

The Governing Body will have responsibility for monitoring this policy.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will demonstrate through personal leadership the importance of this policy ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to it. The Headteacher will monitor the impact of this policy.

Where additional funding is available for raising the achievement of specific groups of students, the Headteacher of School will ensure that the additional resources are used appropriately for this purpose and targeted on the basis of identified needs. The Headteacher will report termly to the Governing Body.

Heads of Department

Heads of Departments or the nominated subject leaders will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring curriculum policies and planning in their own subject areas to ensure that equality is being promoted.

Teachers

Teachers will familiarise themselves with this policy and know that their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented. They will know the implications of the policy for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for behavioural issues.

Pastoral Team

Members of the pastoral team will familiarise themselves with this policy and know that their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented. They will know the implications of the policy for facilitating mediation, holding restorative conversations and making referrals to a range of external agencies.

Associate Staff

Associate staff will familiarise themselves with this policy and know what their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented.

Students

Students will be made aware of how the policy applies to them. They will learn to treat each other with respect and report incidents of discrimination to an appropriate adult.