

EQUALITIES POLICY

The community of St. Mark's believes that every individual is created by God, and is precious to God. Each person is called to serve God and their neighbour and to fulfil their potential.

St. Mark's is a Catholic School, which has at its heart a love of God, the education of its students, and a mission to serve our neighbours and community. We seek to foster a spirit of truth, reconciliation, justice and peace. We are committed to developing the spiritual, intellectual, moral, cultural, social and physical potential of all our members within a safe and supportive environment.

INTRODUCTION

Equality of opportunity for all is of fundamental importance to the Christian ethos of the school.

The fostering of a positive, non-discriminatory ethos and atmosphere is jointly the responsibility of the whole school community – including governors, teachers and other staff, pupils and parents. Staff and governor training and the school curriculum should acknowledge this responsibility.

St. Mark's Catholic School is committed to the principles of equality, justice and social cohesion. It embraces the need for all pupils to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity which is confident and self-affirming yet also open towards other identities.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Equal Worth

All individuals are of equal worth. The ethos of St. Mark's will foster attitudes, values and relationships which promote an understanding of and respect for others, whatever their ethnicity, religion, culture, nationality or linguistic background.

Identity

St. Mark's will support the development of the personal, social, religious, linguistic and cultural identities of all staff and pupils.

Citizenship

The curriculum will promote a positive awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all as active contributors to racial justice and social cohesion .

Ethnicity

St. Mark's wishes to adopt one of the key recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report: we have the duty to create and implement strategies in our school to prevent and address racism.

Gender

St. Mark's wishes to challenge all forms and patterns of gender prejudice and discrimination in its community, thus improving the life chances of girls and women.

Disability

St.Mark's wishes to play its part in reducing and removing inequalities which limit the life chances of people with disabilities, and in working for a more just, equal and cohesive society.

1. STAFF

Recruitment and Promotion

- All posts, including internal appointments, will be advertised.
- For all posts there is a written job description and person specification.
- Where candidates are equally qualified, Catholics will be preferred.
- Appointment to pastoral posts and Senior Teacher will only be given to Catholic teachers except in very exceptional circumstances.
- Posts of Headship, Deputy Headship and R.E are reserved for Catholics.
- Measures are taken to attract applicants from a range of backgrounds and communities, for example in the wording and placing of advertisements.

Support and Development

- All staff, teaching and support, will receive high quality training to help them achieve their potential.
- All staff will be part of the Performance Management cycle and be given annual performance management interview to assess performance, career needs and prospects.
- The composition of teaching and non-teaching staff will be regularly reviewed. A staff profile is compiled each year, giving statistical breakdowns by ethnicity and gender.

Working Environment

- Ethnic, religious and cultural diversity among staff will be acknowledged and respected in everyday conversations and school culture.
- Any racist or sexist comments, language or 'jokes' will be routinely challenged.
- The visual environment will reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity, women's interests as well as men's and awareness of the variety and range of human experiences.
- All teaching areas will be seen as having equal status. As far as possible all areas of the school should be made accessible to people with physical disabilities. New buildings should be designed to be so accessible.

Information

- There is a code of practice, outlining specific procedures to be followed, for recording and dealing with racist incidents (RB2 Incident Sheet).

2. CURRICULUM

- The curriculum should positively reflect and build on contributions of all people irrespective of gender, race, ability, etc. Negative and stereotyped images should be avoided. Bias and prejudice should be actively challenged.
- Subject teachers will make use of learning resources that reflect and promote diversity, and promote minority role models.

- The school will collect and analyse data on the academic performance of ethnic minority pupils. Where the evidence from monitoring shows unequal outcomes between different ethnic groups, action will be taken to promote greater equality. Results of monitoring are routinely reported to governors and senior management.
- The school will provide EAL support and ensure that specialist staff are appropriately qualified and trained.
- In every subject opportunities are taken, as appropriate, to teach about race equality and cultural diversity.

3. PUPILS

- Pupils know the school's commitments and requirements on issues relating to race and gender equality and cultural diversity and have opportunities to contribute.
- Boys and girls have equal access to social and play spaces.
- All pupils will have equal access to resources.

Classroom

- Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils, in which pupils from all backgrounds feel affirmed, safe and unthreatened.
- Staff ensure that they pronounce ethnic-minority names correctly
- Displays of pupils' work reflect a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society and world.
- Care should be taken to ensure that standards of behaviour expected of pupils, and punishments awarded for misdemeanours, are equitable and that these should not be influenced by considerations of gender or ethnic origin.

Monitoring

- Deputy Head (Staffing) uses borough background monitoring form for all applicants for posts. This also covers candidates who are interviewed and appointed.
- Inset needs for all staff, teaching and support staff, are identified through the performance Management process.
- The staff profile is monitored by the Headteacher and is reported to the Governors' Staffing Committee.
- Racist incidents are recorded and reported to the Borough by the Deputy Head Pastoral. Sexist or homophobic incidents are recorded on Communication Slips by staff and dealt with by the PPL or Deputy Head Pastoral.
- The Deputy head (Premises) monitors access arrangements.
- SLs regularly review the curriculum to ensure there are no negative or stereotypical material. They ensure that race equality issues and cultural elements are part of the experience for students in their subject area.

- The Deputy Head (Curriculum) coordinates analysis of examination data including ethnicity.
- Lesson Observations and book checks are used to monitor equality and cultural diversity in the classroom.
- Analysis of exclusions by ethnicity and gender are reported to the Governing Body.

Last Reviewed: October 2018