

ST AMBROSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

SPRING 2021

Reviewed: July 2023

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of St. Ambrose Preparatory School and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

At St Ambrose we aim to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 3 to 11; St Ambrose is an inclusive school where the Gospel teachings and our school values are at the centre of everything that happens in our school family. At St Ambrose we strive to develop happy, fulfilled, well educated, confident and caring children who know and understand the love, joy and peace of Jesus; and to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to be an exemplar Edmund Rice School, with an enviable reputation amongst our peers, both as an organisation and for the services and facilities we provide, making us first choice for parents and pupils in our geographic area.

Our Ethos & Values

At St Ambrose we provide a Catholic school community in which pupils feel welcome, safe, recognised for their individuality – supported by a community of love, and affection. We strive to live the Gospel in all aspects of school life and policy, following Blessed Edmund's footsteps.

This policy is applicable to all employees and pupils (including those in the E.Y.F.S.)

(Staff are notified of regular ISI updates)

The Governing Body of St. Ambrose Prep School understands its regulatory responsibilities and will maintain an effective oversight of this policy, by evaluating its effectiveness, and reviewing and implementing change.

Introduction

The Governors of St Ambrose Preparatory School are committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils and staff (both present and prospective). This document is a statement of the Governors' policy. It seeks to achieve equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, age and disabilities. It has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act of 2014 and encourages respect for all with particular regard to those with protected characteristics.

A statement of intent as a Catholic School Community

We wish to ensure that every pupil and employee is made aware that he or she has a worthwhile contribution to make to the life of the school and that each contribution is valued by others.

The purpose of this policy statement therefore is to: -

- Recognise the illegality of discrimination, where any pupil or employee is treated less favourably than others on the grounds of gender, race, class, physical disability or religion.
- Acknowledge the existence of discrimination and commitment to the provision of equal opportunities and equal entitlement to all in our school community.
- Ensure that a clear and agreed policy on equal opportunities is put into practice at St Ambrose Preparatory School and that it is taken into account in planning for school and curriculum development.
- Provide a framework for evaluation and monitoring of equal opportunities provision within the school.
- Ensure that there is an equal opportunities entitlement for all pupils though this might

not necessarily be identical.

The following are statements taken from National Curriculum Council Department Three. They indicate the necessity for a whole-school policy and some implications for its implementation.

“In order to make access to the whole curriculum a reality for all pupils, schools need to foster a climate in which equality of opportunity is supported by a policy to which the whole school subscribes and in which positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds are actively promoted.”

“The ethos of a school should support the school’s policy on equality of opportunity by countering stereotypes and prejudice, reducing the effects of discrimination and helping pupils to accept and understand social diversity. Teaching materials should not be stereotyped or discriminatory. Where evaluation shows material to be inappropriate, plans for its replacement or adaptation should be established.”

Aims

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that each child is given opportunities to encounter and develop knowledge, skills and understanding which meet their own needs.
- To ensure that the learning experiences offered to all pupils are of high quality and thoughtfully planned, giving them access to the full range of resources and activities available in the school.
- To choose learning materials and resources which avoid gender bias, stereotyping and reflect the diverse and multi-racial nature of our society.
- To provide opportunities in curriculum content to promote pupils’ understanding of and interest in different environments and societies from their own.
- A balance needs to be struck, when choosing themes or topics, or within planned learning experiences, to take into account the interests of girls and boys and promote awareness and respect for different cultures in our own and other societies.

Resources

- Books and resources in the school are checked before purchasing to ensure that they do not give stereotypical or over simplified view in terms of culture, race, gender or disability. When choosing new materials, we should look for balance so that minorities and both sexes are depicted in positive roles in stories and settings.
- Language used in resources should be monitored for bias, so that we do not promote negative or derogatory images (e.g. 'natives', 'primitive' 'squaw') or the overwhelming predominance of men and boys, to the exclusion of women and girls, in positive roles.
- Display materials and illustrations should reflect the diversity of our society where appropriate and again show women in positive situations and roles.

Teaching strategies to suit the needs of children

High expectations must be held for and by each pupil (low teacher expectations are a major source of pupil under achievement). Structured discussion and debate and collaborative problem solving allow pupils to develop the ability to distinguish between fact and fiction, and to understand about negotiation, compromise and consensus decision making. Such opportunities enable pupils to develop a respect for, and a tolerance of, opinions which are not their own, and to recognise and challenge stereotypes.

National Curriculum

In order to make access to the whole curriculum a reality for all pupils, schools need to foster a climate in which equality of opportunity is supported by a policy to which the whole school subscribes, in which positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds are actively promoted. Multicultural perspectives added to the curriculum enrich the education of all pupils, helping them to view the world from different standpoints to develop open-mindedness and question prejudice.

Policy in Practice

The school's commitment towards providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils is clear

from its policy statement.

Several positive steps have already been taken towards the fulfilment of this aim.

- Daily organisation procedures such as registers, seating arrangements, delegation of tasks, assemblies etc. are non-discriminatory.
- Some extra-curricular activities e.g. rugby, chess and art club are not mutually exclusive and thus non-discriminatory.
- The school's discipline policy states sanctions undertaken in the event of any form of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour such as racial assessment.
- Equal Opportunities Policy is monitored and reviewed by the senior management team annually.

This policy was written with regard to the Equal Opportunities Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A GOVERNING BODY

The governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with the **DETAILS OF ACTS**; and
- Making sure the equal opportunities policy and its procedures are followed.

B HEADTEACHER

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the equal opportunities policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents and guardians know about it;
- Making sure the equal opportunities policy and its procedures are followed;

- Producing information for staff and governors on request, about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary;
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support as required, in carrying these out; and
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination in any form.

C ALL STAFF

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with cases of harassment and discrimination in any form, and being able to recognise and respond to cases of bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting equal opportunities and good race relations, and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins;
- Keeping up to date with the laws on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities with the support and guidance from the coordinator.

D STAFF WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Non statutory guidance to racial equality suggests a senior member of staff or a governor be responsible for overall co-ordination; at St. Ambrose Preparatory School the Head teacher has overall responsibility but may delegate responsibility to a named coordinator for:

- Co-coordinating work on equal opportunities; and
- Dealing with reports of incidents.

E VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following, our equal opportunities policy.

1 RACIAL EQUALITY

At St. Ambrose Preparatory School we aim to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, and to promote

equal opportunities and good race relationships in all areas of school life.

We have a book for logging racial incidents. The Head teacher should be informed immediately of any such cases.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Acknowledging that members of the school understand different cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and endeavouring to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in everyday school life;
- Valuing the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community;
- Acknowledging that while there is a need for pupils to learn and communicate in standard English, their home language should be celebrated and respected;
- Not tolerating racist behaviour in any form.

2 GENDER

As a school we aim to eliminate unlawful gender discrimination in any form and, wherever possible, to promote equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Encouraging pupils to be aware of gender stereotypes presented by, for example, the media, and gender bias views in literature;
- Examining the curriculum, procedures and resources for gender bias inequality;
- Providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions;

3 SEXUALITY

At St. Ambrose Preparatory School we aim to eliminate any unlawful sexual discrimination in any form.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Making no assumptions about sexuality of any members of our school community;

- Sex Education for upper junior children – answering pupils' questions as they arise as honestly, factually and non-judgementally as possible;
- Not tolerating name calling of any sort.

4 RELIGIOUS

As a Catholic school we aim to uphold the Catholic faith while recognising and exploring other faiths.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Implementing the opportunities presented in the CTS religious programme to explore other faiths;
- Promoting non-discriminatory attitudes among pupils;

5 CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

At St. Ambrose Preparatory School we apply the principles underlying the **National Curriculum as stated in Section 1 of the Education Reform Act of 1988**. These principles place a statutory responsibility on schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We aim to provide a curriculum that offers all children the chance to develop an extensive range of subjects, knowledge and skills.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Assessing and meeting the needs of all our pupils;
- Creating a happy and educationally exciting environment in which all abilities can prosper;
- Implementing a wide range of teaching and learning strategies to allow children of different abilities the chance to achieve;
- Recognising that pupils with specific educational needs constitute a very diverse group; they include pupils with physical, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties, those with impaired sight or hearing, and those who are especially able;
- Providing specific educational needs teaching for children who, for the reasons given above, may need extra support;

- Seeking assistance and advice from a range of agencies where appropriate: for example, speech therapists, medical practitioners, psychologists, social workers and the staff of the Hearing-Impaired Unit.
- Working in line with the Specific Educational Needs Policy;
- Working in line with the Early Years Equality guidelines;
- Providing opportunities for discussion and exploration of prejudice, stereotyping and bias;
- Encouraging children to apply a discriminatory approach to all they hear and read; to be aware of authors' bias and to read critically (e.g. in the English curriculum);
- Allowing children to develop the skills necessary to distinguish between fact and opinion (e.g. in the History curriculum);
- Ensuring that pupils with physical disabilities are facilitated in participating in the school's curriculum to the fullest possible extent within the limitations of the building;
- Promoting high standards of good behaviour through the development of self-discipline and mutual respect for others;
- Implementing sanctions and rewards consistently throughout the school.

6 HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Harassment and bullying may be described as unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found to be objectionable and offensive and that might threaten a child's security and employee's job security, or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. This may be based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or age. As a school we will not tolerate harassment, abuse or intimidation to other members of the school community (reference to our Anti-Bullying Policy).

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Ensuring that all members of the school community are alert to all forms of bullying and harassment as outlined;
- Creating a safe and welcoming environment for all;
- Ensuring that all staff are confident to deal firmly, consistently, and effectively with bullying and harassment.

7 RECRUITMENT AND PUPIL ADMISSION

We aim to reflect the make-up of the local community in the people employed, in the light of suitability of applicants for a post. We strive to ensure that the pupil admission policy is non-discriminatory.

IMPLEMENTATION

- This policy will be communicated to staff through the circulation of the written policy statement and through staff meetings.
- The aims of the school regarding equality will be both explicitly and implicitly conveyed to all, through the example of the senior leadership of the school and all staff employed at St. Ambrose Preparatory School.
- The In-service training requirements of the equal opportunities policy will be considered within the School Development Plan.

ASSESSMENT

The impact and effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be assessed by:

- Collecting and analysing relevant monitoring and other data;
- Talking to pupils, parents and staff to find out their needs and opinions;
- Carrying out surveys, one-to-one interviews, classroom discussions, professional dialogue or special research;
- These duties will be carried out by the Head teacher on an annual basis.

REVIEW

The results of these assessments will be used to:

- Review the Equal Opportunities Policy objectives (where necessary);
- Establish how effective the policy is in tackling discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
- Inform the school community about how the policy is working.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

The Head teacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with this document and will put into practice school disciplinary procedures as appropriate with the support of the Senior Leadership Team and all staff.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if legislation requires.