

**St Michael's Catholic Primary School**  
**Policy for Equality of Opportunity**  
**(Including Race Equality)**

In formulating and applying this policy, the Governing Body and Staff of our Catholic school seek to promote and implement in relevant ways the aims and intentions of the Mission Statement, '*Praise the Lord in Work, Play and Prayer*', that has been agreed by the whole school community.

We are committed to taking all possible steps to positively promote equality of opportunity for all members of our school community, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background. We regularly review the relevant plans we have in place regarding access for pupils, staff, parents and carers with any disability to all aspects of the life of our school.

This policy will be available to staff, pupils and parents and will be promoted among them.

## **1. Aims and Values**

As a Catholic School we understand that

"All human beings are created in God's image; they have the same nature and origin and, being redeemed by Christ they enjoy the same divine calling and destiny... forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design." *(Gaudium et Spes, 1965, para. 29)*

We do all we can to live Jesus' message to love and care and share with others both within the school community and beyond. We believe that our Christian ethos pervades the school and guides how we deal with all those people we meet in our time in school.

We seek to uphold the uniqueness of the individual in which each person is seen as made in God's image and loved by Him. We attach great importance to giving each pupil opportunity and encouragement to develop individual talents to the full. Governors and staff always strive to overcome barriers to learning, so that all pupils at our school get a fair deal. We try to ensure that everyone in our school community is given opportunities to value their own contribution and to have this noticed and valued by others.

We celebrate the diversity of culture, race and talents represented within our school and in the local and wider community. In line with St Michael's status as a Catholic School, the majority of pupils and staff are members of the Catholic Church, but as well we welcome and value those who join with other beliefs and backgrounds. We positively promote racial equality and good relations between everyone in the school and also within the wider community. We will be proactive in challenging, tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination on grounds of race, disability or gender. In meeting the diverse individual needs of pupils we aim to prepare all pupils for living and working in a multi-cultural society.

We recognise that it is important that our pupils have access to positive role models and are able to see a wide variety of people of both sexes and different racial backgrounds in positions of leadership and responsibility.

## **2) Key Responsibilities**

### **2.1 The Governing Body's responsibilities**

2.1.1 The Governing Body is committed to fulfilling obligations under current legislation, including compliance with:

- the school's duties under legislation concerned with race relations, sex discrimination, special educational needs and disability discrimination.
- Fostering better personal, community and race relations as highlighted in the *Macpherson Report*.
- Government policies aimed at raising educational standards, such as target setting by schools and promoting the inclusion of pupils with special needs or a disability;
- the promotion of the inclusive approach demanded by the National Curriculum, when teachers interpret the educational objectives of the subjects and courses they provide.

Relevant legislation and guidance is listed at Appendix 1

Where there is any doubt about the application of any part of the policy or the Law, guidance will be sought as appropriate from the Diocesan Schools Commission and the Local Authority.

### **2.1.2 Communications**

Governors seek to ensure that terminology reasonably considered likely to be offensive to ethnic minorities or other sections of the population is not used verbally, in correspondence or other documents originating in the school.

### **2.1.3 Training**

Members of the Governing Body Governors have attended relevant training in relation to the law, school policy, their own personal liability under the law and the nature of discrimination to ensure that procedures are carried out with full regard to this policy. Within the resources available, further suitable training about governors' duties and responsibilities will be arranged when this is relevant.

## **2.2 The Headteacher's responsibilities:**

- implementing this policy
- ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibility under this policy and are given appropriate training and support
- taking appropriate action in any case of unlawful discrimination, whether it arise from considerations of race or any other grounds
- Ensuring relevant actions for promotion of this policy and monitoring of its outcomes are included annually in the School Improvement Plan

## **3) Other school policies/schemes in place to promote equality**

**3.1** This policy covers all aspects of equality of opportunity, with detailed mention wherever relevant of **Racial Equality** issues.

Our commitment to promotion of equality, including race equality, applies to the full range of the Governing Body's policies. Targeted policies or schemes are in place regarding

- **Gender Equality**
- **Disability Equality Scheme**
- **Accessibility plan**

## **3.2 Other relevant policies:**

### **3.2.1 Admissions policy:**

The Governors' admission policy is subject to annual review. Governors do not and will not in future give preference on grounds of sex, race, ethnic origin or ability, to any application for admission. Governors will give priority to admitting baptised Catholic children. This is in conformity with the school's Instrument of Government and with relevant legislation. The

Governing Body will comply with legal duties to admit children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names St Michael's School, and to give the required priority to applications from 'Looked After' children who seek admission.

### **3.2.2 Gifted and talented pupils:**

A separate policy is in place to guide staff in providing for the needs of gifted pupils and those with special talents in particular areas of learning.

### **3.2.3 Special Educational Needs**

Governors ensure that the Special Educational Needs Policy is regularly updated and underpins appropriate provision for pupils with special educational needs.

### **3.2.4 Other school policies:**

When any policy is formulated or reviewed, relevant mention of aspects of equality of opportunity will be included to reflect the school's aims and values as outlined in this policy document.

### **3.2.5 Local Authority and Diocesan policies and guidance:**

We value the advice and support of our local authority. Local authority policies and guidance about equality of opportunity, racial equality and other matters covered by this policy will be considered and will always be followed unless they are at variance with Diocesan advice and the Catholic ethos of the school.

## **4. Specific Provision Regarding Race Equality**

### **4.1 Aims :**

We see promotion of race equality as being integral to our mission as a Catholic school. The Governing Body, Headteacher and staff are committed to

- ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and enabled to achieve their full potential.
- respecting and valuing diversity of cultures, faiths, languages and beliefs.
- preparing pupils for life in a diverse society.
- acknowledging the existence of racism and taking steps to prevent it.
- promoting good relations between different racial groups within the school and within the wider community.
- being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

**4.2 Key Responsibilities** of the Governing Body, Headteacher and staff with regard to racial equality are detailed in relevant sections of this policy

### **4.3 Teaching and Learning**

Teaching takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and different learning styles.

Different cultural traditions are valued in their own terms and made meaningful to pupils. Teachers challenge any instances of stereotypes, bias and racial discrimination.

### **4.4 Admissions and attendance**

The admissions policy ensures that pupils from particular racial groups are not disadvantaged.

### **4.5 The content of the Curriculum**

All areas of the curriculum promote positive attitudes towards diversity and difference.

Steps are taken to ensure all pupils have access to mainstream curriculum.

Resources and displays portray positive images of people from diverse traditions.

Role models from a range of different racial and faith groups are used to share a wide range of skills and experience.

#### **4.6 Staff**

All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained to avoid racial discrimination. Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored and evaluated by ethnicity.

### **5. Implementation of this policy:**

#### **5.1 With regard to pupils:**

##### **5.1.1 Monitoring of pupils' progress and development**

The school has equally high expectation of all pupils and is committed to encouraging and enabling all pupils to achieve high standards. We see careful monitoring and evaluation of the academic progress, personal development and attendance of each child as essential, to aid in identifying any child who may be missing out, difficult to engage, or feeling in some way to be apart from what the school seeks to provide. We recognise that commitment to equality does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. Rather it means that we will equitably take account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We will pay particular attention to the provision made for and the achievement of different groups of pupils, including

- girls and boys;
- minority ethnic and faith groups, Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees;
- pupils who need support to learn English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- pupils with special educational needs;
- gifted and talented pupils;
- children "looked after" by the local authority;
- others, such as sick children; young carers; those children from families under stress;
- any pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

##### **5.1.2 Aims for curricular provision**

To provide an environment where all children can develop in love of Jesus and understanding of the Catholic Faith.

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that each child is given opportunities to encounter and develop knowledge, skills and understanding which meet his or her own needs.

In planning the curriculum to take account of relevant analyses of the performance of different groups of pupils (for instance of boys and girls), and to ensure that the learning experiences offered to all pupils are thoughtfully planned to meet the differing needs of such groups and to support their progress.

To select curriculum content so as to promote pupils' awareness, understanding, interest and respect for different environments, societies and cultures.

To take into account the varying needs of different groups, for instance boys and girls, when planning learning experiences, in considering teaching and learning styles, and in choosing themes and topics.

##### **5.1.3 Learning Resources**

Books and other learning resources in school have been checked to ensure that they do not give a stereotypical or over-simplified view in terms of culture, race, gender or disability.

In choosing new learning materials and resources, we seek to reflect the diverse and multiracial nature of our society and to avoid bias and stereotyping. When choosing new materials, we will look for balance so that minorities and both sexes are depicted in positive roles in stories and settings.

#### **5.1.4 Accommodation**

The Governing Body will, whenever possible, make provision for specific mobility or other needs so that each child receives their entitlement of access to the curriculum. Governors have surveyed the buildings and adopted a disability access plan. This identifies improvements desirable to aid access for all parents, staff and children. They will improve disability access in accordance with this plan, as and when funding can be identified within the budget or obtained as specific grants.

#### **5.1.6 School and Classroom Organisation**

School lists will be organised in year groups by alphabetical order rather than by sex, unless this information is required for a particular purpose.

In the case of Nursery age children, pupils will be listed according to their date of birth.

Children will be grouped by classes when coming into school or to assembly.

Equality of opportunity needs to be considered when grouping children for activities. At times some activities may involve children of a single sex working together.

Staff will group children as they judge appropriate to ensure that every child has the opportunity to fully participate, for instance in decision making and in gaining 'hands on' experience.

Each child is given opportunities to exercise responsibility within the classroom or school, with care taken so that stereotyping of roles and expectations does not occur. At St Michael's we see both boys and girls as carers and leaders.

#### **5.1.7 Pastoral Care, Relationships, Personal Development and Behaviour**

Personal support takes account of religious and ethnic differences.

We promote good relationships and perceptions of equality between all children.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

We help children to understand that name calling, bullying or biased attitudes and behaviour are not acceptable either in our school community or in the world beyond.

We challenge discrimination in any form, whether it be on grounds of race or from any other perceived difference. Appropriate support is given to victims of racism and racial harassment. In lessons, children are regrouped for specific tasks so that different individuals have opportunities to join together in co-operative activities.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and equitable to pupils from all racial backgrounds. All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and sanctions.

Exclusions and attendance are monitored by ethnicity to establish patterns and trends and appropriate action taken to address the resultant issues.

#### **5.1.8 Links with the Local Community**

When possible we welcome visitors to the school who can share their experiences and aspects of their culture with the children.

Family members are also invited into school to contribute to the breadth of pupils' understanding, for instance grandparents talk of their childhood.

We pursue opportunities to build wider contacts with cluster and other schools.

## **6 Implementation with regard to staffing and employment matters:**

### **6.1 Introduction**

At St Michael's, as is the case in other Voluntary Aided schools, the Governing Body is the employer of staff and is responsible for equal opportunity matters in employment. Governors intend that, consistent with their obligation to secure, preserve and develop the religious character of the school, no job applicant or employee shall receive less favourable treatment because of his or her sex, colour, nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, or disability.

Our staff are our greatest resource. Each member of staff, teaching and non-teaching, is valued for the unique contribution s/he makes to the life and work of the school.

The school bases its employment practices on the concept of equality of opportunity and a spirit of justice and universal brotherhood in accordance with the message of the Gospel and the teaching of the Catholic Church. This policy is designed to promote and facilitate equality of opportunity, and to consolidate and develop existing practices and objectives with regard to matters of staffing and employment.

### **6.2 Policies relating to Employment**

#### **6.2.1 Pay Policy**

In formulating and reviewing the pay policy, the Governing Body will take full account of all legislation relating to equality of opportunity and its promotion, including that relating to race relations, gender equality and disability. Full and appropriate consideration will be given to guidance issued by the Diocesan Schools Commission and the Local Authority.

The application of recruitment, training, redundancy/transfer and promotion policies to all individuals will be on the basis of job requirements and of the individual's ability and fitness for the post in question. Personnel policies and procedures will be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against equal opportunities and their implementation will be regularly monitored. Any data obtained from the monitoring process will be interpreted carefully. It will not be automatically assumed that differing outcomes necessarily indicate that discrimination, lawful or unlawful, is taking place.

#### **6.2.2 Recruitment Procedures**

It is seen as essential that persons responsible for appointments, when short-listing or interviewing applicants, should seek to appoint the most suitable person for the position. During this process there is no place for discrimination on the basis of assumptions that individuals possess characteristics which would make them unsuitable for employment, because of their sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, or disability.

Applicants for vacancies shall be given information about posts through advertisements, person and job specifications in order to enable them to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about the posts shall be prominently displayed to ensure the full implementation of this policy.

Headship vacancies will be advertised nationally. All other posts will be formally advertised so that recruitment by word of mouth only will be avoided.

The Governing Body will decide whether posts will be advertised internally within the school or externally or both, but will normally advertise on as wide a basis as possible to attract suitably qualified and experienced candidates. The Governing Body will decide in which publications advertisements will be placed.

All applicants shall be informed that the school operates an Equal Opportunities Policy. Such information shall be conveyed on all post information details.

Requirements or conditions will not be set which have a disproportionately adverse effect on any applicants other than those which are justified for the preservation of the religious character of the school.

Persons making appointments will endeavour to conduct interviews on an objective basis and deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the job requirements.

Where there is doubt about a disabled candidate's suitability for employment because of the nature of the disability and where in particular, those doubts are the sole inhibition on the offer of a post, further advice should be sought from the Local Authority.

### **6.3 The responsibilities of employees**

All employees will be expected to co-operate with measures introduced by the Governing Body to ensure there is equality of opportunity and no discrimination in staffing procedures and appointments. This responsibility will apply to all staff, not only to those with managerial responsibilities, since every one shares the duty, in a Catholic school, to promote as far as is possible fair and just treatment of all within the community. All staff are expected to

- deal with racist incidents or any other form of discrimination that may occur in the school
- identify and challenge racial and cultural bias and stereotyping
- support pupils for whom English is an additional language
- embed principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.

### **6.4 Complaints**

Governors will take seriously claims by individuals that they are encountering prejudice or discrimination in their work and will not dismiss them as over-sensitivity. In applying disciplinary procedures, consideration will be given to the possible effect of prejudice or communication difficulties or differences in the background on an employee's performance.

Where it appears on complaint to the Clerk to the Governors that this Equal Opportunity Policy is not being followed, the circumstances will, in the first instance, be investigated by the Headteacher and a report sent to the governors. Disciplinary action will be taken if appropriate. These arrangements will not, however, detract from a complainant's right to take action under relevant legislation. It is also open to the complainant to seek advice from the Equal Opportunities Commission, Commission for Racial Equality or, in the case of an existing employee through the Grievance Procedure operated by the school if this is their preference.

### **6.5 Training**

All staff will be given suitable training and support in relation to

- school policy,
- the nature of discrimination,
- the law and their own personal liability under it,
- requirements regarding the positive promotion of equality,

to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and are able to carry them out.

## **7 Implementation of the Policy**

### **7.1 Monitoring Systems**

**7.1.1 The Governing Body** will ensure that systems are in place regarding:

- Monitoring educational outcomes for different groups of pupils, including monitoring pupils' attainment and progress by ethnicity to identify patterns of under-achievement).
- Monitoring pupils' attendance by ethnicity
- Monitoring incidents of harassment and discrimination by ethnicity,
- Making provision for children, staff and visitors who may be disadvantaged by physical disabilities
- Monitoring educational provision and outcomes for any other groups or individuals in potentially disadvantageous circumstances.
- addressing any inequalities through development planning and in submitting funding bids for new initiatives.

**7.1 2 Governors** will monitor the application of this policy on an ongoing basis through their informal contacts with the school.

**7.1.3 The Headteacher** will include mention in the termly report to the Governing Body of successes or difficulties encountered in the implementation of this policy.

## **8. Review of this Policy:**

This policy will be reviewed at least once every three years as part of the Governing Body's cycle of policy review, to ensure that it is effectively underpinning inclusive practice and provision for equality of opportunity in all aspects of the life of the school. It may be reviewed at any time at the recommendation of the Headteacher, or if governors, staff, parents or pupils request this.

## **9. Previous related policies:**

This policy replaces the Governing Body's previous policies regarding equality of opportunity and race relations.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body ...*18<sup>th</sup> February 2008*...

Reviewed: *1<sup>st</sup> February 2011*

Reviewed 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012

Signed .....

(Chair of Governors)



## Appendix 1

### ***Useful references and further reading***

1. *Gaudium et Spes, (papal encyclical) 1965*
1. Equal Pay Act (1970), and Equal Pay (Amendments) Regulations (1983);
2. The Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act
3. Codes of Practice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality (April 1984) and the equal Opportunities Commission (1985) pursuant to the above Acts.
2. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: the Macpherson Report
4. Learning for All pub Committee for Racial Equality
5. The Employment Rights Act 1996,
6. The Employment Relations Act 1999 and The Employment Act 2002
7. 6. DfEE Circulars 11/96, 12/96 and 3/97 (About the Implications of the Disability Discrimination Act).
8. Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Guidance Code issued by the Manpower Services Commission (October 1984).
9. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975,
10. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
11. The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000,
12. The Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations,
13. The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002,
14. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
15. section 60(5) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998
16. Regulation 7 of the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003,
17. School Governance (Procedure) (England) Regulations 2003,
18. 'Anti-discrimination Legislation Relating to Religion and Sexual Orientation'. published November 2003 by Archdiocese of Birmingham Diocesan Schools Commission and available at <http://www.bdsc.org.uk>