

# Pucklechurch C of E VC Primary School

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### 1. What sort of school are we?

The School provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by ethnic diversity, culture and faith of its citizens.

The primary focus of education is to increase life chances.

Our school serves Pucklechurch village and the surrounding communities. It is a Church of England, Voluntary Controlled school and values its good relationship with the local church community, but it also works hard to ensure our children understand the celebrations and beliefs of the other major world faiths. Our children mostly come from nearby, some from long established local families, and reflect the many different socio-economic backgrounds in our area. We currently have no pupils for whom English is a second language. We have slightly more boys than girls. There is an annual 5% pupil turnover. We are proud that our children's achievements in national SATs tests have been consistently above national averages.

It is the policy of the Governors and staff of Pucklechurch C.E. School to create a positive atmosphere in which children feel safe, secure and happy and are given the maximum opportunity to learn while developing self-discipline, a respect for themselves, for others and for the environment.

This policy applies through out the school day.

We are a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school. We have four church foundation governors and we have strong links with St Thomas a Becket church in Pucklechurch. We hope that the education we offer will form a foundation for children to be open, positive and knowledgeable about the Christian faith. But we don't see the role of the school as 'selling' the Anglican religion. We do not want to lost the trust of children, parents or staff who do not share the Church of England beliefs.

**Actions** speak louder than words and both the church and state inspectors note that children and staff at Pucklechurch School demonstrate key Christian values such as:

- Respect
- Kindness
- Tolerance
- Use of Talents
- Equality Before God
- Positive Regard to Worship

We intend to build on this foundation and develop the links between the school, parents and the church.

## **Aims of Equal Opportunities Policy**

Equality of opportunity is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

It is based on the following core values and ethos as expressed in this school's aims/mission statement.

*The school's vision is 'Co-operate to Educate'.  
We promote high achievement in all aspects of  
education by working together so that the  
children:*

- ✓ become independent thinkers and learners*
- ✓ have high self-esteem and learn to care for themselves, others and their world*
- ✓ become good, kind, honest citizens*
- ✓ aim for excellence in literacy and numeracy*
- ✓ reach their potential in all other areas of the curriculum*
- ✓ are encourage to learn how to learn, especially with developing or new technologies*
- ✓ understand the meaning and significance of faith within the context of Christian belief and practice*

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we value cultural diversity, meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion and ensure that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

### 3. The School's Commitment to Race Equality

The School provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by the ethnic diversity, culture and faith of its citizens.

The National Curriculum encourages schools to:

*"Prepare all pupils for life in a world where they will meet, live and work with people of different cultures, religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds."*

The School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

We recognise:

- the inclusive nature of the National Curriculum 2000 and the opportunities Citizenship presents for encouraging 'respect for diversity'
- the importance of celebrating festivals from diverse faiths.
- that minority ethnic groups include Gypsy Travellers, Refugees and Asylum-seekers and less visible minority groups
- the important contribution immigrants and their descendants have made to Britain.
- the importance of Global Citizenship.
- the importance of strong home/school and wider community links.
- our duty under the Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000) to promote race equality actively.
- the recommendations of the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence:  
*"That Local Education Authorities and school governors have the duty to create and implement strategies in school to prevent and address racism"* (Recommendation 68).

**The definition of institutional racism is** "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, colour or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtless and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people."

**A racist incident is** "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person"

Pucklechurch C of E VC School will not tolerate racial harassment of any kind. We are committed to combating racial discrimination.

## **Actions to ensure Race Equality**

NB: These commitments are substantial and significant and will need to be planned and phased in order to make them manageable.

1. We shall undertake a race equality audit using the Commission for Racial Equality's *Learning for All: Standards for Racial Equality in School*.
2. As a result of the audit, we shall:
  - o Set race equality targets.
  - o Write an action plan to ensure targets are met.
  - o Make the policy and targets known to all teaching and support staff, pupils and parents.
  - o Monitor pupils by ethnic group.
3. The Race Equality Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher & Governing Body.
4. The Governing body will comment on how race equality targets have been met in their annual report to parents (and what impact they have had on minority ethnic pupils, staff and parents, with the emphasis on the attainment of minority ethnic pupils).
5. The school will take steps to monitor and further develop good practice.
6. Race Equality training will be part of the induction & Staff development programme for all teaching and ancillary staff, student teachers and governors.
7. We shall adhere to South Gloucestershire LEA's guidance on Dealing with and Reporting Racial Incidents.
8. All class teachers/tutors will be trained in the care and support of pupils who have experienced racial abuse.
9. The school will endeavour to ensure that the governing body & staff team reflects the local community it serves.

## **Other related school policies**

Racial equality is included as an explicit aim in the school prospectus and in all of the school's policies.

#### **4. Leadership and Management**

All the school policies will reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including race equality.

The governing body and school management set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

The school promotes positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

The school management will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity, oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

All staff contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes appropriate steps to enable the contribution of parents.

The evaluation of policies will be used to identify specific actions to address equality issues.

Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for minority ethnic and Traveller pupils) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

#### **5. Staffing: Recruitment and Professional Development**

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures, which are fair, equal, and in line with statutory duties and LEA guidelines.

Steps are taken to encourage people from under represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

## **6. Curriculum**

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls;
- pupils learning English as an additional language;
- pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- pupils who are gifted and talented;
- pupils with special educational needs;
- pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

## **7. Teaching and Learning**

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum.

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.

## **8. Assessment, Pupil Achievement and Progress**

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

The monitoring and analysing of pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and background enables the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupils' progress.

## **9. School Ethos**

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.

The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups.

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.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant school policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.

## **10. Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions**

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

Where strategies are required to reintegrate any long term truants or excluded pupils, they will address the needs of all pupils.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour, but all staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

## **11. Personal Development and Pastoral Care**

Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum seeker children.

The school provides appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

The school takes account of and meets the needs of Traveller pupils.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

## **12. Admissions and Attendance**

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance which includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision is made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance is monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

## **13. Partnership with Parents and the Community**

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

The school takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under represented groups of parents and sections of the community.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

#### **14. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The member of staff named below will be responsible for co-ordinating work in equal opportunities.

#### **15. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated 2 years after the date of the policy by the member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities.

**Member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities:  
Headteacher, Maggie Cook**

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Approved by the Governors on 3 April 2003

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Date of review of policy: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2005

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