

# St Mary and St John CE Primary School

## Equal Opportunities Policy

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### **Mission statement**

“Within our tradition as a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, we are committed to making St Mary and St John an inclusive environment fostering curiosity, spirituality, creativity and respect. At our school we want everyone to be valued, to explore the joy of learning and achieve their full potential.”

Equal opportunities are at the heart of our mission statement and the school community is committed to and seeks to uphold equal opportunities legislation in all its activities.

We aim never to discriminate unfairly against individuals based on their protected characteristics and in particular their gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

### **Admissions**

The school follows the Local Authority and Governing Body Admission Policies which do not permit sex, race, religion or disability to be used as criteria for admission (see admissions policy).

### **Curriculum**

We are committed to provide an inclusive environment that values all individuals and seeks to promote that attitude in the pupils. Literary texts, historical figures for study are selected to provide a balanced representation of society and to provide positive role models of all groups of people.

All pupils follow the same curriculum.

### **Resources**

Teaching material and library books reflect the diversity of our community, and we seek to provide positive images of all groups.

### **Language**

The school views linguistic diversity positively. Pupils and staff must feel that their first language is valued. Pupils' names are accurately recorded and all staff endeavour to pronounce them correctly. Pupils are encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

### **Religious Education and Assemblies**

Members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith: others are committed to different religions. We seek to promote an ethos of

tolerance, based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

We tell parents that they may withdraw their child from assemblies and RE lessons if they wish, providing they have discussed the matter with the Headteacher.

## **Gender**

As a school, we accept that there are gender inequalities in our society which impose limits both on all forms of gender expression. We also acknowledge that there are a small number of children and adults for whom the binary distinction of male/female does not apply, and that there are some children and adults who may wish to identify with a different gender to that to which they are born.

We encourage pupils to be aware and critical of the rigid gender stereotypes presented by, for example, the media. We try to ensure that our resources include non-sexist books, which value the achievements of all.

We aim to ensure

- that teachers allocate their time fairly among all children and we do not routinely divide children into groups on gender lines.
- that we break down traditional gender stereotypes (for example by not asking boys to move furniture while girls tidy up),
- that pupils have opportunities for examining their own pre-conceived ideas of gender-roles,
- that pupils are encouraged to pursue less conventional subjects and interests (for example, girls to read more non-fiction and boys more fiction; girls to develop mechanical interests, boys' creative skills),
- that, wherever possible, classes have equal numbers of boys and girls.

## ***Trans and Intersex Children and Adults***

We make all reasonable adjustments to accommodate trans and intersex children and adults by

- Promoting an accepting and tolerant community;
- Providing private changing and toilet facilities if required;
- Our uniform policy is gender neutral;
- Derogatory name calling of any sort is not acceptable.

## **Sex and Relationship Education**

As a school, we make no assumptions about the sexuality of any of our members. In our curriculum, sexuality is taught within the context of loving relationships. Whilst heterosexual relationships are the most common in our society, we acknowledge that a small but significant number of our pupils will develop a homosexual or bisexual orientation. Discussion of homosexuality is therefore included in the sex education programme for our Y6 pupils. In addition, pupils'

questions are answered, as they arise, as honestly, factually and non- judgementally as possible.

We tell parents they may withdraw their child from sex education lessons if they wish, providing they have discussed the matter with the Headteacher.

### **Culture, class and race**

We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.

We recognize the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life. For example, always at least two vegetarian options at school meals.

We are happy for pupils to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background - Sikhs' turbans, Muslim girls' headscarves etc.

We value the history, experience and contribution of our multicultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school: all members should feel that their language or dialect is valued and that bilingualism is regarded as advantageous.

### **Recruitment, selection and staff development**

We endorse in full the policy statement of Oxfordshire County Council Equal opportunity in employment.

The school's staff development and recruitment and selection policies (qv) are based on good equal opportunities practice. The governors' equal opportunities statement (which is included in all job advertisements) is as follows: SS Mary and John is working towards good equal opportunities practices: applications are welcome from all sections of the community and candidates will be considered solely on their professional suitability for the post.

### **Relationships within the school**

All pupils teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors, caretaking, catering and cleaning staff, governors and any other members of the school of the school are expected to respect all members of school and the wider community. Adults are expected to demonstrate and promote equal opportunities in the way they behave and talk.

Derogatory name-calling (of any sort) is unacceptable.

### **Equality objectives**

**Objective 1**

To undertake an analysis of behaviour incidents and record any significant trends relating to protected characteristics.

**ACTION:** to monitor behaviour termly (6 times a year) and highlight any concerns. To use the SDP on personal well-being/educating the whole child to set out specific actions.

**Objective 2**

To track attendance data and aim for 96% attendance from all groups with protected characteristics once adjustments are made for children with specific needs e.g. medical appointments.

**ACTION:** to monitor attendance monthly and use a range of strategies to improve attendance for children with 90% or below attendance. To record these in regular reports.

These objectives will be reviewed annually and new objectives written every three years in line with the policy review date.

This policy was agreed July 2016

Amended – equality objectives: June 2019

Approved by the Governing Body: June 2019

Review date: May 2022