Equality and Diversity Policy

Approved by: Governors Approved on: **08/03/2023**

STA Contact: Headteacher Revision due: **Spring 2027**

St Andrew's
NIHIL SINE LABORE

1. Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies of the school and West Sussex Guidance including:

- the school's Code of Conduct document which sets out the expected standards of behaviour and conduct for all employees
- St Andrew's Accessibility Plan
- St Andrew's Anti Bullying Policy
- St Andrew's Conduct and Consequences Policy
- St Andrew's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- St Andrew's Sex and Relationships Policy

2. Presentation

St Andrew's C of E High School is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where respect, responsibility and integrity are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At St Andrew's we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

Our community believes that:

- all are made in God's image and therefore have a positive contribution to make to the school community
- the school values underpin all our activities for both staff and students
- everybody should have an equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from society.

3. Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with a clear statement about the school's commitment to promoting equality and diversity within employment.

We seek to ensure that our working environment is one that respects and includes everyone regardless of their gender or gender reassignment; marital status (including civil partnership); sexual orientation; race, language, ethnic or national origins and nationality (including citizenship); religious belief; disability and / or medical conditions; age; whether they have dependants; trade union membership status and activity or political views/affiliations.

4. Definitions

Equality is about opportunity, access, participation and contribution on a fair and equal footing and providing a framework for this to happen.

Diversity acknowledges there are differences between people and the school values and respects the variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values and beliefs of its employees.

Direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourable than others in comparable circumstances because of a special characteristic such as gender, race or disability.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has a different impact on one or more protected groups of which the complainant is one and is placed at a disadvantage as a result.

Victimisation is treating a person less favourably because they have taken a 'protected action' in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague who is making a complaint or claim against the Act.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them on grounds of one of the relevant characteristics such as gender or race.

5. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the school to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

Please click on this link to see Department for Education advice for Schools. DfE Equality Act 2010 - Guidance for Schools.

6. Guiding principles

- We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all by eliminating discrimination. We will do this by ensuring that our practices reflect relevant employment legislation and good practice. Our employment decisions are based upon job related, objective criteria.
- We are committed to having a workforce that reflects the diversity within our community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

7. Guidelines to implement the policy

The work towards this policy implementation falls into two broad categories: promoting equality and preventing inequality and discrimination.

Promotion of equal opportunities is actively promoted to every member of the community and users of the school through:

- organisation of the school into houses as a basic social structure
- accessibility plan for the school
- organisation of the curriculum
- the content of the whole school curriculum including the PSHCE programme and assembly/form time materials provided for teachers
- student voice through the work of the Student Council and Make Learning Better groups

- staff induction programmes
- school policies linked to this policy
- staff recruitment procedures
- national accreditations awarded and CPD opportunities.

Racial equality is specifically promoted through activities in house and year assemblies, RE lessons, PSCHE classes, in English through the use of texts dealing with issues of prejudice and poetry from other cultures, and in History through examination of the Holocaust and slavery. There are numerous examples across all subjects that demonstrate our awareness of other cultures.

Disability equality is promoted as described above. More specific examples of this work are found in PSCHE schemes of work and our charity foci, also when making specific arrangements for any disabled student to take part in activities e.g. providing specially adapted resources for students with visual or hearing impairments.

8. Gender equality, sexual orientation and gender reassignment

The school works within the DFES guidelines and HR procedures as laid down by the local authority. Our admissions policy and recruitment practices do not allow for any discrimination with respect to sexual orientation. We take homophobic bullying as seriously as any other form of bullying. Anyone who has changed gender, is in the process of changing gender or who has indicated they intend to change gender is also protected from direct, indirect discrimination or harassment.

We actively challenge traditional gender stereotypes through our curriculum.

As a Church of England (Aided) school we hold a daily act of worship or reflection that is broadly Christian in content, however, members of all faith communities or none are encouraged to participate. When moral issues are discussed, Christian perspectives are explored and other religious and non-religious views are included in order to reflect the whole community. When staff are appointed there is always discussion of their position regarding the Christian ethos of the school and their willingness to work within in regardless of their own beliefs.

9. Pregnancy and maternity

The school is committed to providing support for staff who are pregnant or who may wish to return to work having given birth. Paternity leave is also supported.

Our recruitment practices do not discriminate with respect to age of staff. Safer recruitment guidance is adhered to.

Social inclusion is supported by dealing sensitively with financial difficulties in order to ensure that less privileged families are included in any curriculum activity requiring additional funding. St Andrew's can also support families with uniform items. Some students are given financial support for travel to or from school, or educational visits. Any monies for these purposes are finite.

Preventing inequality and discrimination is taken seriously and the school endeavours to respond quickly and sensitively to any discriminatory incident. We actively prevent inequality through:

- our shared vision and aims
- our positive behaviour management
- our referral and reporting system which includes the reporting of racist incidents
- our conduct and consequences policy
- actively encouraging staff and students to challenge stereotype attitudes and behaviours

- raising awareness of potential discrimination particular to the context of St Andrew's
- our CPD, staff training and modelling of behaviours
- targeting of support for potentially vulnerable groups of students.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is communicated and made readily available to staff, governors, parents/carers and students
- this policy is implemented
- staff are aware of their responsibilities
- staff are given appropriate training and support for carrying out their responsibilities
- appropriate action is taken in any cases of unlawful discrimination
- there is a member of staff responsible for reporting incidents of racism.

The Governing Body is responsible for making sure:

- the school has a policy in line with the Equalities Act 2010
- the school's Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed.

10. Employee responsibilities

All employees, irrespective of their role, have a personal responsibility to comply with this policy, associated policies and to abide by the Equality Act 2010, in dealing with each other, managing staff and in their relationships with children, parents, carers, governors and other stakeholders.

In particular, employees, must not:

- discriminate against colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors or other stakeholders
- bully or harass colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors or other stakeholders
- encourage or try to encourage another person to treat others unfairly or to practice unlawful discrimination
- victimise people who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or who have provided information about such discrimination.