

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

including Anti-Racism

**The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination.**

### **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE**

When making decisions and developing policies, the Pope Francis MAC must have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics

The protected characteristics to which the Act applies are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race (including colour, ethnic or national origins and nationality)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

The **duty to make reasonable adjustments** which existed under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is replicated in the Act. The duty is triggered where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other who are not disabled and requires schools to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid the disadvantage.

There are three parts to the duty: changing the way things are done, making changes to physical features; and providing auxiliary aids. The Act extended the duty in relation to auxiliary aids so that since 1 September 2012, schools have been required to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils where these are not supplied through SEN statement of EHC Plans or from other sources.

The protected characteristics of **age** and **marriage and civil partnership** apply to staff but not pupils. The Act extended protection to pupils in relation to the protected characteristics of **pregnancy and maternity** and **gender reassignment**.

### **THE AIM**

We see our first task as equipping pupils with an awareness of an increasingly diverse society and of presenting the world as it is and as we would like it to be. On such foundations, pupils will develop their own attitudes to a pluralistic society. The Pope Francis Catholic MAC's experience is

that pupils of all backgrounds exhibit a strong desire to be part of society as it exists within our community.

## **PRACTICE**

### **Admission**

The Pope Francis Catholic MAC follows the Governing Body Admissions Policy, which does not permit academic ability, sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for non-admission. As an academy we are committed to preserving the Catholic ethos of the Pope Francis Catholic MAC. Our first priority in admissions is to the Catholic pupils in our area. After that, should places still be available, these are open firstly to those who specifically request a denominational education. If places still remain, then others in the community will be accepted up to the agreed planned admission number. All applications will be assessed on the degree to which the Pope Francis Catholic MAC can adequately cater for a child's needs. Discussion about the support requirements for the child will be separate to the consideration. No pupil will be refused a place on the grounds of disability alone before an opportunity has been provided for full consideration of the specific support or facilities required in consultation with the Principal, SENCo and other experts.

### **Discrimination**

All forms of discrimination by any person within the Pope Francis Catholic MAC are to be treated seriously. Incidents, whether they take place in the playground, corridors or teaching areas, should be recorded on G4S. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist remarks/attacks are recorded formally and dealt with according to the Behaviour Policy.

Parents should be aware of the Pope Francis Catholic MAC's commitment to equal opportunities.

### **Staff**

The Equality Act makes it unlawful for the Pope Francis Catholic MAC and therefore, any of its employees to discriminate in the field of employment, against any lines of discrimination. This applies in all areas including terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies. This Code of Practise aims to ensure that the Schools Act within the law.

The Pope Francis Catholic MAC values diversity amongst the staff.

As a Catholic school, in all staff appointments, our first priority is to seek out Catholic staff to fill vacancies. However, they must be suitable to the post based on their ability to carry out the task effectively rather than just on their religious commitment. Where two colleagues are deemed equally able to fill a post, then if one is Catholic they should have first offer. In most cases, the best candidate will be appointed, based upon strict professional criteria providing they have agreed that they can willingly support the Catholic ethos of the Pope Francis Catholic MAC.

In order to understand the background and experience of ethnic minority pupils and to raise expectations of their potential, staff need to be aware of the historical and contemporary processes which have caused, and may continue to sustain, racism. Close liaison with families in the Pope Francis Catholic MAC is beneficial to all concerned.

### **The Curriculum and Assessment**

All pupils must have access to the Pope Francis Catholic MAC's curriculum. Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil. The curriculum must be balanced, objective and must not discriminate on grounds of

sensitive, and must not highlight sexual and cultural diversity. The Pope Francis Catholic MAC will take appropriate steps to ensure that lessons are organised in ways that offer the best possible opportunities for full participation for all.

### **Health and Safety**

The Pope Francis Catholic MAC ensures that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other Health and Safety issues within the schools that affect them.

### **Language**

The Pope Francis Catholic MAC views linguistic diversity positively and staff should be aware of the language and dialect spoken by pupils and their families. Staff must be conscious of any racist or sexist connotations in the language they use themselves.

Pupils and staff must feel that their language and dialect are valued. They should therefore be allowed to use their home language in school but never to use it to exclude others.

### **Resources**

The Pope Francis Catholic MAC's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability, or ethnic origins.

Wherever possible, staff must ensure that the resource used in all curriculum areas are multi-cultural and non-sexist, containing positive images of all groups.

Variety should be evident in the morals, stories and information offered to children. Pupils should have access to accurate information about similarities and differences between cultural groups.

Updated November 2017