



ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Equality Information and Objectives Policy

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Statement of intent

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy recognises that certain groups in society can be disadvantaged because of unlawful discrimination they may face due to their race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy serves the town of Bedlington in south east Northumberland and the surrounding areas. A large number of pupils travel to school by bus from as far north as Alnwick. The number of BAME (Black and minority ethnic) pupils in our community is lower than the national averages.

Our disadvantaged pupils in respect of whom we receive additional funding are monitored as a discrete group to demonstrate that we invest wisely to diminish differences in outcomes for these students compared with their peers. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance and to subsidise where appropriate, purchase resources and uniforms.

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals have a high priority, although financial disadvantage is not a protected characteristic in law, it is a significant priority for schools. Evidence shows that disadvantaged children are likely to have suffered the greatest learning loss during school closures due to the global pandemic. The academy has a plan in place to address this.

The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by EAL. This is available on request.

Our Mission Statement

Our mission statement is to – “To seek wholeness, through faith quest and learning, to become what God intends us to be” – St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is a Christ-centred community founded on the Gospel values including love, truth, justice and reconciliation, which exists to educate the whole person and to develop the full spiritual, academic and moral potential of all students.

Through this mission statement the school promotes the individuality of all our students.

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is under the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

Our School Values and Vision

At St Benet Biscop we believe that every person is an image of God. We want our thoughts and actions to be inspired by this sacred understanding we have of ourselves and of each other. Our school community will keep alive the memory of Jesus through the Eucharist and in the practice of our Faith. We want to encourage, inspire, challenge and care for each other, be open to the wider world about us, and celebrate together our reasons for living and hoping.

At St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability or any characteristic and to participate fully in school life. The school community aims to teach children about their rights, about respect for

one another and the wider communities to which they belong. We recognise and nurture individuality and the unique talents and characteristics of each child. Equality principles underpin our values and ethos.

We respectfully challenge any member of the school or wider community who expresses their prejudice or discomfort towards people with some or any of the protected characteristics; our priority is to protect every member of our community from prejudice, harassment or discrimination.

Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Staff all use a graduated approach to identify anything that affects a child's ability to learn, then we use strategies and interventions to help improve the situation. Learners and their families are always involved in this process.

We are committed to ensuring that learners with SEND enjoy the same opportunities as other children, including external visits and activities.

This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the school community and workforce

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. The school fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.

- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The responsible body for the school is the Headteacher and Bishop Bewick Trust.

The school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities.

The school will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

2. Principles and aims

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

The school will:

- Promote **race equality** and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.
- Promote **disability equality**, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- Promote **gender equality** by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity amongst individuals of all genders.

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term '**transgender**' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. The school will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. The school's Admissions Policy will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

The school will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the governing board.

- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy, procedure or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of any protected characteristic.
- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will

- Ensure that the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to:
 - Publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.
 - Update and publish information every year to demonstrate school compliance with the PSED.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the school's Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the governing board.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The Headteacher will:

- Implement this policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.

- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.
- Produce an annual report on the progress of implementing the provisions of this policy and report it to the governing board.

Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the school.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the Head of progress or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.
- The school will have an equality page on its website, in order to demonstrate how it is complying with the PSED in the Equality Act 2010, and advancing equality of opportunity.

4. Equality objectives

The school is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils and other members of the school community.

To achieve this, the school has established the following objectives:

Objective	Timescale	Resource	Action	Success criteria
Improve the accountability and impact of objectives through regular termly meetings with Equality Link Governor – resulting in annual report to governors and feedback in governing body meetings when appropriate	July 2023	Staff time	LP / KS	Grading of progress towards objectives for example use of RAG. Adaptions from findings.
Consciously use and develop awareness of inclusive language. This	Dec 21 & Ongoing	Staff CPD	LP / LW	Student voice Staff feedback

is an ongoing piece of work, as language changes constantly.		G Finch Equalities officer NCC		
Continue to improve the variety and quality of provision to promote diversity and tolerance	Easter 22 and on going	G Finch and padlet education resource support. Curriculum time.	LP, LW, HOPS, LH	Assembly themes promote diversity and tolerance. Chaplaincy Programme is inclusive. Full student participation in diversity and tolerance immersion day.
Review and refined Core Studies & RSHE curriculum (Updated RHSE is in delivery already) to ensure high quality resources, support and impact.	July 24	Staff time External support PHSE Association 10:10 Resources	LW, LP, MKE, LH & HODs	Robust RHSE & Core Studies SOW. To gain a full knowledge & understanding in relation to the protected characteristics of what issues are being covered – in which depts, at which key stage etc. and ensure any potential 'gaps' are filled through quality provision.
Evaluate, and where necessary improve, current approach and systems to support LGBT students in school– particularly any who may fall victim to bullying	Dec 21 and on going	Staff time G Finch Trinity Youth Association	LP LW	Completion of student and parent surveys CPD for staff from Trinity Youth Association / GF Further evaluation of the impact of support groups in school
Increase participation in personal development opportunities for all students but with monitoring of engagement of vulnerable groups and protected characteristics with actions to raise this where engagement is low.	Check points each term on engagement.	Subject area time RISE Funding Compass+ MIS	LP, HODs, HOPs, Admin support	Monitoring and evaluation reports of students attending. Student voice.

The school will regularly review the steps being taken and the progress made towards the achievement of these objectives and, in line with the specific duties of the PSED, publish this information on the school website every year. The school will update and publish its equality objectives at least every four years.

5. Collecting and using information

In accordance with the requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data will be lawfully collected and processed in line with the principles and practices outlined in the Data Protection Policy and only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, e.g. to comply with the school's legal obligations.

The school will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods.
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.
- Acting, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

The school will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. The school will obtain the following information from their staff:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- Appraisals
- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

The school will use the information they obtain to analyse any gaps present in their equality documentary, including the Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils and Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

6. Publishing information

The school will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the Act. The school will publish information relating to persons within the school community who share relevant protected characteristics when appropriate upon request, the school has less than 150 employees.

The school will not provide this information if:

- The employee is employed under contract personally to do work.
- The employer does not have, and it is not reasonably practicable for the employer to obtain the data.

The school will publish findings in its annual report.

The school will update its equality objectives at least every four years and publish on the school website. The school will publish information on the school website every year which will show the progress made towards the achievement of the equality objectives.

7. Promoting equality

In order to meet our objectives, the school has identified the following priorities:

- The school will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled pupil's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, so they can integrate wholly in all parts of school life.
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the school will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- The school will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.
- There will be differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils.
- There will be a clearly defined disciplinary system stipulated in the Behavioural Policy, which will be consistently enforced.
- The school will increase access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum and will take necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling them to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the school.
- The school will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the school.
- The school will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.
- The school will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local schools.
- Throughout the year, the school will plan ongoing events to raise awareness of equality and diversity.

The school will consult with stakeholders to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning.

Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly. Annual training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

8. Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice. The school will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. The school will address any incidents immediately and, where appropriate, report them to the LA.

9. Complaints procedures

The school aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure. Any

person, including a member of the public, is able to make a complaint about the provision of facilities or services that the school provides.

The school will adhere to the Complaints Procedures Policy to ensure a straightforward, impartial, non-adversarial process, that allows a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality and delivers an effective response and, appropriate redress. If a complaint has completed the school's process and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to appeal, as outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

The school works to develop good professional relationships between colleagues; however, we understand that sometimes conflicts may arise. Through maintaining open communication, we want our employees to feel able to raise any grievances so that appropriate and effective solutions can be put in place. Grievances raised by staff members will be processed in accordance with the school's Grievance Policy.

10. Curriculum

All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.

When planning the curriculum, the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. When teaching the curriculum, the school will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination. The school will develop an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups and will ensure PSHE lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality.

11. Monitoring and review

The headteacher will review this policy annually, to ensure that all procedures are up-to-date. The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and governing board in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data
- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.