

Thomas More Catholic School



Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and our environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.
To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities, which take us all confidently through the 21st Century

EQUALITY POLICY

(This replaces the Equal Opportunities Policy, Practice and Procedure)

Date Reviewed	10th May 2016
Review Confirmed by	Resource Committee
Next Review Due	Summer Term 2017

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. Non statutory guidance from the DfE has been issued for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities. This policy is based on that guidance.

The **school has a duty** to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and those who don't

The **protected characteristics** are:

- age* (staff only/employment)
- sex
- race
- disability-the person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to day duties
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment (a transsexual person is someone who proposes to start or has completed a process to change his or her gender)
- pregnancy or maternity

The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools still apply – such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and schools of a religious character.

It is now unlawful to victimize a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or a sibling.

The Act limits the circumstances in which an employer can ask health-related questions before a job offer is made. Targeted, necessary and relevant health related questions may be asked once the offer is made.

Proportionate positive action may now be taken by schools to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with protected characteristics.

**(NB 'age' is a protected characteristic but not in relation to pupils of any age in a school)*

Purpose

This policy is in place to ensure that the school's ethos, policies and practices respect and protect the rights of all individuals, and promote practices to ensure that all pupils and staff are enabled to make the most of their abilities and qualities. It is central to the promotion of community cohesion.

We will make every effort to ensure that all groups prosper and are not subjected to harassment or discrimination using this policy to support good decision making. We will ensure that we consider how different people will be affected by our plans and policies so that provision is appropriate and accessible to all and meets different people's needs. We will consider the impact of plans and policies in relation to:

1. employment
2. pay
3. sex and sexual orientation
4. race
5. disability
6. religion or belief
7. gender reassignment
8. pregnancy or maternity
9. Special Educational Needs including those who exhibit challenging behaviour and those with emotional, mental and physical well-being needs
10. children who have frequent moves and lack stability in life leading to time out of school or low attendance
11. those who are caring for others
12. children from homes with low income, and/or inadequate home study space
13. children with low levels of parental support or different parental expectations

Relationship to other policies

This policy relates to all our policies.

Roles and responsibilities

School Governors are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with current equality legislation
- making sure this policy and the single equality scheme are properly implemented
- making sure related procedures are followed
- assigning a named governor

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their
- parents/carers know about it
- making sure its procedures are followed
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working
- providing training for them on the policy
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying
- these out
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All school staff are responsible for:

- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom
- modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to:
- recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone
- keep up to date with the law on discrimination and take training and learning opportunities

Pupils are responsible for:

- supporting the schools equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda, which will recognise
- good practice and enable review and development - this may include:
 - the anti-bullying policy and specifically racist and homophobic bullying
 - developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the schools equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- following our expectations regarding equality

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with a named member of staff and governor. Responsibilities include:

- co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. children and young people in care, children from minority ethnic/language or traveller communities, disabled pupils etc.)
- monitoring exclusions

The governing body expects all members of the school community to be committed to this policy, and that visitors will comply with it. It accepts responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in every aspect of school life. If there is a breach of the policy, the school will take appropriate action. This may include the following.

In the case of pupils breaching the policy:

- staff dealing with the incident will complete an incident report form
- the perpetrator will be dealt with in accordance with the behaviour policy
- the consequences of any further breach of conduct will be clearly stated with the ultimate sanction of exclusion

In the case of staff breaching the policy the relevant procedures outlined in the 'Employee Complaints and Grievance policy' will be instigated.

In the case of parents, visitors or contractors breaching the policy they will be reminded of the school's commitment to equality and asked to desist, and further incidents may lead to individuals being requested to leave school premises.

Serious breaches constitute criminal offences and will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Concerns or complaints

In the first instance a senior member of staff should be contacted. If issues or concerns remain unresolved these should be raised in accordance with the schools policy.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The governing body will receive reports from the school and governor responsible that enable evaluation of the implementation and impact of actions taken to achieve the equality objectives. It will monitor the pattern and frequency of equality related incidents – defined as any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to contravene this policy- and evaluate the effectiveness of response.

Who was consulted?

The policy was developed through consultation with all sections of the school community.