



**St Peter & St Paul**  
Catholic Voluntary Academy  
*Pro Petro Paulo Patria*

Policy Document  
Status: Approved  
Confidentiality level: Public

# Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

*Policy Ref No. EOD 01*

**'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

### **The Ethos of St Peter and St Paul**

*"Our academy is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do.*

*Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.*

*We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith."*

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

### **The uniqueness of the individual**

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

### **The search for excellence**

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

### **The education of the whole person**

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the academy serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

### **The education of all**

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

### **Moral principles**

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

### **Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:**

Any person recruited to the service of the academy, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the academy and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

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## **Contents**

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Contents .....                    | 3 |
| Introduction .....                | 4 |
| Aims.....                         | 5 |
| Discrimination .....              | 5 |
| Complaints Procedure.....         | 6 |
| Discipline .....                  | 6 |
| Disabilities.....                 | 6 |
| Education.....                    | 7 |
| Public Sector Equality Duty ..... | 7 |
| Conclusion .....                  | 7 |

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## **Introduction**

Our academy's commitment is to value the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils; varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations for all pupils. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter.

The Academy will adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against students, parents/carers or anyone involved in external agencies with which the organisation may be working on the grounds of:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

All staff has a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat students with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass students or their parents/carers, regardless of their status.

We are opposed to all forms of discrimination and committed to ensuring all young people are respected and treated fairly at all times.

No student will be suffer any ill-treatment from the Academy due to the behaviour of their parents/carers and/or siblings.

The Academy may decide to use the 'Positive Action' clause of the Equality Act 2010, which allows for the setting up of courses specifically for a certain group, such as Afro-Caribbean boys or Roma children. (Previously, this could have been considered discriminatory).

The Academy has a responsibility to promote good relationships and mutual respect. It is expected that every person in the organisation will make a positive contribution to this policy, namely:

- All staff, whether paid or voluntary
- All visitors to the Academy
- All students at the Academy
- All parents/carers of students at the Academy

All staff has a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues and students with dignity at all times, regardless of their status. Similarly, all students have a duty to act in

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accordance with this policy and treat fellow students and staff with dignity at all times, regardless of their status.

In addition, the academy will:

- ensure that the services it provides are accessible to all and endeavour to positively encourage and benefit people from disadvantaged groups
- supply specialist aids and facilities to enable disabled people
- monitor any issues that arise within the organisation and take appropriate action, fully supporting any person in the organisation who is faced with prejudice or ill treatment.
- undertake an annual evaluation process to ensure that the policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to
- treat seriously any breaches of the policy which may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

### **Aims**

This policy explains the way in which St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. The policy will be applied to all students within the academy and parents/carers within our academy.

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination in education. It applies to all aspects of a student's education with the academy.

The Academy may choose to amend this policy at any time.

### **Discrimination**

Students must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, fellow students and parents/carers, this applies within the Academy, outside the Academy (such as when travelling on academy transport) or while wearing the Academy uniform and on Academy-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- Direct Discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, refusing a student's admission to the Academy due to their religious views or sexual orientation.
- Indirect Discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring that no students wear any headwear may disproportionately affect female Muslim students who wear a hijab. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

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- Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- Disability Discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Any person (students/parents/carers) who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy has not been respected whether by a student, an employee of the Academy or the Academy Trust as a whole, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of their Form Tutor or Head of House. No student will suffer any detriment as a result of raising a legitimate worry under this policy. If any parent/carer of a student at the Academy experiences or witnesses any behaviour from a fellow student/parent/carer on the grounds of the Academy, then they should inform reception staff immediately.

## **Discipline**

Any student who is found to have breached this policy may be subject to the disciplinary steps depending on the severity of the breach as outlined in the Academy's Anti-Bullying policy, namely:

- an official warning to stop offending;
- exclusion from certain areas of Academy premises;
- removal from lessons;
- a minor fixed-term exclusion;
- a major fixed-term exclusion; or a permanent exclusion.

If any parent/carer is found to have breached this policy on the grounds of the Academy then they may be subject to a fixed-term ban from entering the Academy's grounds.

## **Disabilities**

If a student is disabled or becomes disabled, the Academy encourages them to explain their condition in order for the appropriate support to be put in place.

If a student experiences difficulties at academy because of their disability, the student can speak to their Head of House or the SENDCO to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Academy will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the student's need within reason. If the Academy considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the Academy will explain the reasons and seek ways to find an alternative solution where possible.

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The Academy will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, the Academy will take appropriate steps to improve access.

## **Education**

The Academy is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, achieve their potential.

The Academy shall also ensure that all students are encouraged to develop an insight into the lives and experiences of people with different backgrounds of their own.

Students should, if they feel comfortable doing so, challenge any discriminatory behaviour and report examples of discriminatory behaviour.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

The Academy is committed to complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and this policy is recognition of that duty. As part of its duty, the Academy has committed to the following objectives:

- Promoting cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs within our community.
- Promoting and monitoring the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the academy, including leadership opportunities, especially students with special educational needs and disabilities and those eligible for Pupil Premium funding.
- Monitoring and preventing any behaviour which may constitute prejudice or discrimination towards those with protected characteristics.

## **Conclusion**

Every member of staff has an ongoing responsibility to monitor their teaching methods, styles and practices, with a view to eradicating discriminatory practices. The Academy is committed to ensuring an environment that actively discourages discrimination and challenges the attitudes which underlie it. Periodic monitoring by staff with curriculum and pastoral responsibilities will be undertaken. The Head teacher has the responsibility to ensure equal opportunities are offered in all staffing appointments and promotions.

The Academy will regularly monitor and evaluate its practices and assess the impact of other academy policies upon Equal Opportunities. In the light of those evaluations, the Academy will seek to improve further its practices in the delivery of the above objectives.