



Equality Policy for Holywell School (inc. Equality Objectives)

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Background

Holywell School is a caring, distinctively Christian, community-focussed Church of England School. We aim to continue the historic tradition of Church of England Schools by providing a Christian Values-inspired education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. As a school, we are a loving, supportive community with high aspirations for all. We promote inclusion, we are proud to belong and we value each individual. We look after each other, believe in second chances and aim to be the best we can be so we can serve and support the common good.

This Equality Policy has been written in the spirit of the Church of England's Guidance "Valuing all God's Children" in which we are reminded that "every single one of us is made in the image of God. Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem. Church of England schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value."

"The hallmark of authentic, life-giving relationships is recognition of the sacredness of the other so that all are welcomed wholeheartedly and with reverence. Each person in all their unique difference should be able to thrive, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, academic ability, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Legal framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as

appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

- Principle 1: All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:
 - whether or not they are disabled
 - whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
 - whatever their gender and gender identity
 - whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
 - whatever their sexual identity.
- Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:
 - disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
 - ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
 - gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
 - religion, belief or faith background
 - sexual identity.
- Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:
 - positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
 - positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
 - mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

- Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:
 - whatever their age
 - whether or not they are disabled
 - whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
 - whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:
 - disabled and non-disabled people
 - people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
 - girls and boys, women and men.
- Principle 6: We consult and involve widely. We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:
 - disabled people as well as non-disabled
 - people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
 - both women and men, both girls and boys.
 - All stakeholders regardless of sexual identity
- Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit. We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:
 - disabled people as well as non-disabled
 - people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
 - both women and men, and both girls and boys
 - gay people as well as straight.
- Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence. We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives. Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.
- Principle 9: Measurable objectives We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8). The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities

and issues, as appropriate. Our equality objectives are integrated into the school improvement plan. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Due regard

As a school and a public authority, we, in the exercise of our functions, have due regard to the need to

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Duty in the 2010 Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- tackle prejudice, and
- promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

The relevant protected characteristics are—

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;

- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and achievement
- students' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Holywell School is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in the above paragraphs, namely:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles above
- support students in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all students and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Community Cohesion

We define 'community cohesion' as working towards a society in which:

- There is a sense of belonging by all communities.
- The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued.
- Similar life opportunities are available to all.
- Strong and positive relationships exist, and continue to be developed in the workplace, school and wider community.
- Social mobility is encouraged and facilitated.

At Holywell we define 'community' in a number of ways:

- School community – the students we serve, their families, and our staff members.
- Our local community – our geographical community, and the people who live and/or work in our area.
- Our spiritual community – both the local Diocese of St Albans, and also the Church of England community
- The community of Britain – with all of its ethnically rich and culturally diverse beliefs, populations and practices.

- The global community – formed by the European Union (EU) and international links.

Our contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under several headings, including the following:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum
- Equality and excellence
- Engagement and ethos

Teaching, Learning and curriculum:

Our teaching and the curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and helps students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them.

Lessons taught across our curriculum provide various opportunities for students to develop their understanding and empathy, promote awareness of the rights of individuals, and to develop the teamwork, skills of participation and responsible action.

Equality and Excellence:

At Holywell there is a focus on securing high standards of attainment for all students and removing barriers to learning both in the classroom and in the wider world. Effective procedures exist within our school to tackle prejudice, bullying and harassment.

Our **admission process** promotes community cohesion and social equality.

Engagement and ethos:

Holywell prides itself in providing opportunities for young people and their families to interact and build positive relationships with people from different backgrounds, including links with different schools and communities locally, nationally, internationally and on a wider basis where possible. Our school works in partnership with many external organisations to support our students' education.

We engage with parents through an open-door ethos, parents' evenings, festivals, other celebrations and name of event are considered a priority at the school. It is important to involve children in decision-making and the organisation of the school, teaching students the importance of participation and making a difference to the school, local community and beyond.

Equality Objectives

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are included in our School Improvement Plan and focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages. We will regularly review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives.

The specific Equality objectives in the School Improvement Plan are:

- To actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between all students and groups of students; especially students with special educational needs, disadvantaged students and pupil premium students.
- Further develop the tracking of students and sub-groups to inform intervention programmes and ensure no child is left behind
- To consult and involve stakeholders more widely in decisions which affect them.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

Review

- i. The Ethos Committee of the Board of Governors will monitor and review the implementation of this policy
- ii. The Ethos Committee will review this policy and make recommendations to the full Board regarding further amendments.

Cross reference this policy with the following policies

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Admissions Policy
- RE Policy
- SRE Policy

This Policy was based on guidance from INSTED Consultancy

Appendix 1: Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement. Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. Direct discrimination: This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex etc
2. Indirect discrimination: This means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. Victimisation: This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act or Employment Equality Regulations, for example, by bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.
4. Harassment: Harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it. Harassment may involve any of the following:
 - a. physical contact or violence;
 - b. offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions;
 - c. exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events;
 - d. unfair work allocation;
 - e. unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance;
 - f. offensive signs or notices;
 - g. graffiti;
 - h. repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, student or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

Equality Objectives for Holywell School

Author	MG Simpson
Responsibility	All staff and the governing body
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Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 sets out that all public bodies will publish equalities objectives every four years. This document identifies the equalities objectives that we have chosen to focus on over the next four years, from 2018 to 2022, to improve equality, diversity and inclusion at Holywell School.

We recognise and take very seriously our broad responsibilities as both an employer and as a provider of a service to members of the public.

Holywell School is a caring, distinctively Christian, community-focussed Church of England School. We aim to continue the historic tradition of Church of England Schools by providing a Christian Values-inspired education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. As a school, we are a loving, supportive community with high aspirations for all. We promote inclusion, we are proud to belong and we value each individual. We look after each other, believe in second chances and aim to be the best we can be so we can serve and support the common good.

Our vision is to be an outstanding Christian learning community where everyone is valued as a unique individual and where everyone feels safe. We will aim to be the best we can possibly be, to treat others as we wish to be treated and to make a positive difference to our community and beyond. We strive to be peaceful problem-solvers with open minds and hearts, living God's love and being kind.

As a result, promoting equality is at the heart of all we do. Our equality objectives cover how we consider equality when we teach and support learning, and how we will ensure that students and staff have equality of opportunity.

Our objectives have been developed in consultation with staff and students and we will report annually on our progress. We will review our objectives and targets to ensure that they continue to be appropriately challenging.

Objective 1

To actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between all students and groups of students; especially students with special educational needs, disadvantaged students and pupil premium students.

Objective 2

Further develop the tracking of students and sub-groups to inform intervention programmes and ensure no child is left behind.

Objective 3

To consult and involve stakeholders more widely in decisions which affect them.