

SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL



EQUALITY PLAN JULY 2023

*Statements of progress against this plan will be published annually.
The plan and its objectives will be updated at least every four years*

*This Plan should be read in conjunction with
Sacred Heart High School Policies*

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1 INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

This plan has been prepared in consultation with students, staff, governors and parents. Students were involved from the outset in preparation of the draft policy and the draft was then circulated for further comment to staff, governors and parents. Governors recommended simplifying the legal context in section 2 which was revised and the response from parents and staff was minimal, but supportive.

2 EQUALITY AND THE LAW

2.1 Protected Characteristics and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 sets out various characteristics in relation to which it is unlawful to discriminate, although there are exceptions to some of these as explained later below.

The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Disability
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Equality Act introduced a single **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**, which applies to public bodies including Academy Schools. It covers all equality strands and rightly requires us to promote equality 'having due regard' to the need to:

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

Having 'due regard' in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

The PSED requires us to prepare and publish this Equality Plan and to review it every four years. This also covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme and a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our equality goals and actions to meet them.

The Department for Education (DfE) has published non-statutory advice that sets out schools' obligations under the PSED ('The Equality Act 2010 and Schools, May 2014', hereafter referred to as the DfE guidance).

This DfE guidance clarifies exceptions that apply to all schools and to those with a religious character and single sex schools.

3 THE SACRED HEART APPROACH

At Sacred Heart High School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, disability and disadvantage and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Sacred Heart High School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

As well as the specific actions set out later in this plan; the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

3.1 Teaching and Learning

We:

- Nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements. The local authority maintains a list of all designated senior persons (DSPs) for child protection.
- Use pupil progress data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staff room discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

We constantly review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all our pupils.

3.2 Admissions and Exclusions

In accordance with the law, our admissions policy discriminates in relation to both gender and religion (where we are over-subscribed) but we seek to ensure that our admissions arrangements remain fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Learning and Living in a Sacred Heart Community (Behaviour) Policy and exclusion procedures. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

3.3 Equal Opportunities For Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Sacred Heart High School.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Role of Governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on any protected characteristics.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of any protected characteristics.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a person's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

The governing body ensures that the school's interactions with pupils, parents and carers, staff, applicants and others appropriately respects the protected characteristics listed in section 1.1 above.

4.2 The Role of the Headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equality)

It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and she is supported by the governing body in doing so.

It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers and support staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

4.3 The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

All staff will ensure that all pupils; parents and carers and other staff are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan and objectives.

All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.

All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.

Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

5 TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

Harassment or victimisation on account of any of the protected characteristics is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

5.1 What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person'.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ('a prohibited act') in connection with the Act. E.g. making an allegation of discrimination.

5.2 Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

5.3 Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the wellbeing of the whole school.

5.4 Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Incidents.

Sacred Heart High School adopts a three-stage approach to dealing with bullying **and this includes discriminatory behaviour**. The procedure is set out in section 5 of our Anti-Bullying Policy and is replicated here.

Stage 1 - Prevention

Sacred Heart aims to create a safe learning environment and anti-bullying culture.

Bullying is a *whole school* issue. Every member of the School Community is responsible. The issues of behaviour, good order and bullying should form part of regular discussion and review:

- In PSHE, whole school curriculum and by inclusion and diversity student representatives, staff, parents and governors.
- Regularly as part of tutor time
- At Parent Information Evenings e.g. Internet Safety
- During Anti-Bullying Week
- During Safer Internet Week
- Through regular surveys to evaluate the current climate of the school

The school also seeks to discourage bullying by:

- Whole school Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Girls on Board initiative
- pupil supervision at non-lesson times
- providing safe places for vulnerable pupils to go at break times and lunchtimes e.g. the Kairos Centre
- supervision of corridors between lessons
- opportunities for pupils to discuss bullying issues as part of PSHE lessons and School Council and the Inclusion and Diversity committees
- All pupils will receive guidance on appropriate use of the internet and the consequences of misuse.

Stage 2 – What happens if bullying takes place

All staff should first immediately secure the safety of the young person before following the school's procedures as set out in the box and flow chart and below.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Investigation

Year Team leads, Pastoral Support Managers (PSMs) and the Assistant Headteacher at each key stage investigating the incident should ensure the following procedures are carried out:

- The 'victim' should record the incident or series of events in writing (statements) and have the opportunity to talk through the situation with an adult.
- The 'bully' should also record the incident or series of events in writing (statements) and have the opportunity to talk through the situation with an adult.
- Any witnesses should also be asked to write statements
- Parents/carers of those pupils who were bullied and who bullied should be contacted by phone or asked to meet face to face (depending on the severity of the incident) by the year team lead or the Assistant Head teacher at the key stage.
- **The assistant head teacher at the key stage should produce a final incident report which is passed onto the headteacher to determine appropriate action which may include level three sanctions; a fixed term or permanent exclusion.**

- Every effort should be made to resolve the problem for the bully and this may include the use of outside agencies where appropriate.
- Pupils will be supported in modifying their behaviour through regular monitoring/mentoring by the PSM as part of a pastoral support plan
- PSMs will maintain an overall log of bullying incidents using the bullying or racist incident proforma. This will outline the type of bullying, action taken and the impact of that action. This will be overseen by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for each Key Stage.
- **PSMs have a duty to log and record all incidents of bullying that are connected with protected characteristics on Safeguard (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and also all those classed as cyber-bullying.**

The Restorative Approach

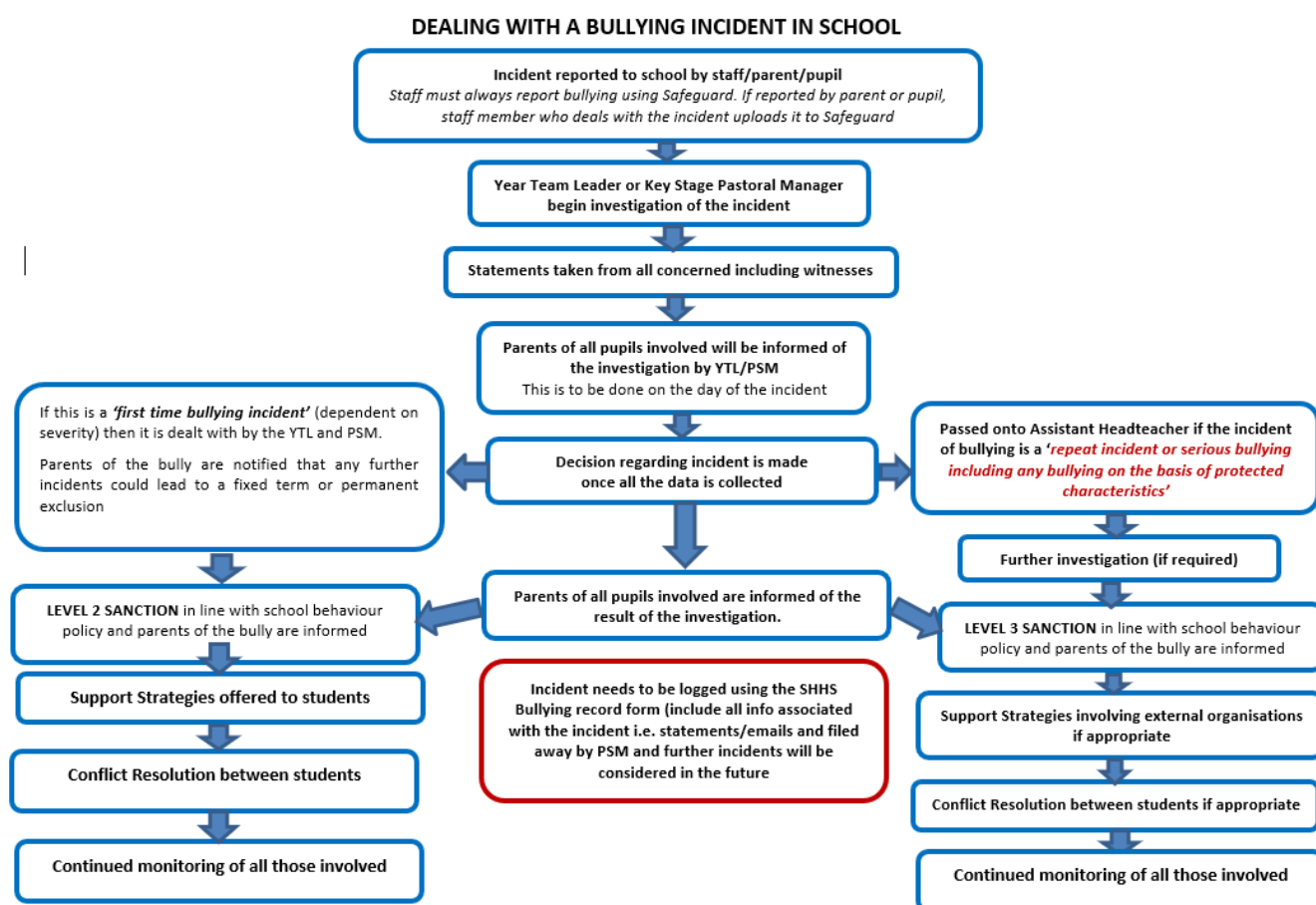
- Where appropriate, and with the agreement of parents and the victim, a restorative approach will be used. This encourages the reporting of incidents by reducing the victims' anxieties about repercussions and educates the perpetrators, by increasing their understanding of the difficulties caused by bullying, and encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions.
- This might mean asking pupils, staff and parents to share their views within a meeting with a facilitator who would ensure that all participants were able to say how they had been affected by the bullying behaviour and what needed to change. As a way forward, if thought appropriate and agreed upon, a contract would be written between the pupils.
- There would then be a series of meetings held between those involved and the Pastoral Support Managers to ensure that the contract was working and that problems had not re-emerged.

Sanctions and Follow-up Actions

- Pupils who bully will be subject to Level 2 or Level 3 sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy (dependent on severity). Level 3 sanctions may include a fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Repeated bullying behaviour towards other pupils will be treated as defiance and will automatically be escalated to a Level 3 fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Based upon legislation in the Children Act (1989), in serious cases, bullying should be seen as a child protection concern if *'there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. Where this is the case, the school must report their concerns to the Local Authority, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub team and may draw on external

professionals to support the victim or to tackle issues which have contributed to a child becoming a perpetrator of bullying.

- The school may report a bullying issue to the police; particularly if staff feel that the nature of the bullying contravenes the law and other measures have been unsuccessful in preventing its recurrence.



6 EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Our equality objectives respond to the three key aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and are set out in **Appendix 1**.

7 REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND IMPACT

We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Objectives (Appendix 1) annually and report this on our website. We will review the entire Equality Plan every four years.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

8 PUBLISHING THE OBJECTIVES AND DEMONSTRATING COMPLIANCE

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to prepare and publish objectives, we will.

- Publish our information and objectives on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the objectives through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available on request.

The information that demonstrates how the school is complying will need to be published at least annually, and information on objectives at least every three years.

Publication of information in future years would include evidence of the progress made against the objectives set. The information released does not simply have to be statistical data but can for example include minutes from governing body meetings that demonstrates progress.

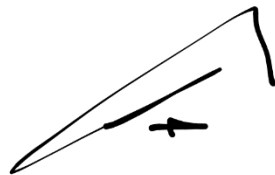
9 RATIFICATION

This Plan was ratified by the Headteacher and Governing Body on **x date**.

Progress against the objectives will be reviewed annually and published on the school website. The plan itself with its objectives will be reviewed four yearly.



Mrs S O'Donovan
Headteacher



Glen Hodgson
Chair of Governors

Appendix 1: Equality Objectives

The school's equality objectives are grouped in relation to the three main aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- **Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation** and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The lead member of staff for all three aims is the Headteacher.

Aspect of the Equality Duty	Issues Identified	Objectives and timescale	Activities	Measuring Progress
1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation	<p>Reduce number of bullying incidents.</p> <p>Students understanding and identification of Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB) and the impact these have on relationships</p> <p>Ongoing need to train and support staff in understanding equality and implications for all on a daily basis.</p>	<p>Reduce prejudiced based incidents in school.</p> <p>Review Relationship, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) curriculum with a view to developing students' understanding of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour and promotes respectful relationships between all students.</p> <p>Increase staff opportunities for training to support Diversity and Inclusion.</p>	<p>Engage with external organisation to review and audit school systems, structures and procedures.</p> <p>Implementation of the Girls on Board Project at KS3</p> <p>Develop targeted student voice work to ensure ongoing access to student views</p> <p>Use Diversity and Inclusion student representatives to develop a programme of activities and events.</p> <p>Develop curriculum work in year groups and assemblies to develop positive attitudes and relationships.</p> <p>Develop opportunities to profile and celebrate different cultures and traditions</p>	<p>Revised procedures in place and evidence students are using them at an earlier stage.</p> <p>Number of incidents of prejudice and bullying reduces in school</p> <p>Increased number of opportunities for students to showcase cultures, traditions and difference.</p> <p>Revised RSHE Policy in place</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion training programme in place for all staff.</p>

Aspect of the Equality Duty	Issues Identified	Objectives and timescale	Activities	Measuring Progress
			Develop staff training to further develop a culture of valuing difference where everyone is respected.	
2. Advance equality of opportunity	Significant national, local and school evidence that students from certain groups consistently achieve lower outcomes including SEN and FSM. Focus on improving the performance of EAL students in English Language	Close attainment gaps for students in disadvantaged groups.	Focus on quality teaching first in the classroom. Use school systems to track, monitor and intervene where necessary to challenge and support progress.	Improved end of key stage attainment and reduced gaps between groups. A clear policy is in place to ensure fair access to opportunities for enrichment, leadership and personal growth and development. The school takes account of all disability issues and does all in its power to cater for the needs of its pupils, staff and carers
3. Advance equality of opportunity	Significant national, local and school evidence that certain groups are excluded at higher than average rates including FSM students	Reduce exclusions and removal from class for students eligible for FSM and those with SEN who currently have disproportionately high levels of exclusion.	Provide staff training on behaviour management. Use early intervention programmes to support modification of behaviour. Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their strengths. Challenge stereotypes	Reduced number of internal sanctions and exclusions for identified groups.

Aspect of the Equality Duty	Issues Identified	Objectives and timescale	Activities	Measuring Progress
<p>4. Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Significant national, local and school evidence that disadvantaged students (SEN/FSM) have lower attendance than other students.</p>	<p>Ensure the attendance of disadvantaged groups matches the school expectation of 96%</p>	<p>Use attitudinal data to support early identification of students who show signs of disengagement with school.</p> <p>Implement year two of attendance strategy.</p> <p>Use The Janet Stuart Centre to provide early intervention Programmes to support</p>	<p>Diminishing gaps between the attendance of disadvantaged children and other pupils.</p>
<p>5. Foster good relationships between groups</p>	<p>Provision for students on the SEN register to include more opportunities to develop positive peer relationships.</p>	<p>Ensure relationships between students with SEN and particularly those with EHCPs and their peers are positive and inclusive.</p>	<p>Provide support and opportunities for SEN students to share perspectives eg dyslexia, ADHD with peers where appropriate.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for students to work together in a variety of contexts; within the curriculum and beyond across year groups, key stage and vertically.</p> <p>Increase the number of leadership opportunities for students across all key stages.</p>	<p>Improved understanding of disability and difference evidenced in positive relationships between all groups within the school</p>
<p>6. Foster good relationships between groups</p>	<p>Identified need to increase the number of parents/carers involved in the life of the school</p>	<p>Continue to provide opportunities for all parents/carers to participate in the life of the school.</p>	<p>Continued development of the PTFA.</p> <p>Provide a programme of workshops to support</p>	<p>Extended range of events arranged for parents/carers and increase in numbers attending.</p>

Aspect of the Equality Duty	Issues Identified	Objectives and timescale	Activities	Measuring Progress
			parents in understanding the academic, pastoral and wellbeing development of students.	