



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Loving God – Serving others – Flourishing together

RESPECT – ASPIRE – REJOICE

Approved by: Full Governors **Date:** 18 September 2025

Next review due by: September 2027

“Encourage one another and build each other up.”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

Legal framework

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, religion and sexual identity.

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

The following document sets out St. Marks' policy on equal opportunities. This policy is intended as a statement of the school's policy to operate a fair procedure to all staff, job applicants, pupils, governors and stakeholders, and all persons involved with the school.

The school is committed to a policy of treating all of its staff, job applicants, pupils, governors and stakeholders fairly and equally. No member of staff, potential member of staff, pupils, governors or stakeholders shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, marital or civil partnership status or part-time status, or will be disadvantaged by any treatment that cannot be justified as necessary on operational grounds.

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.

INTRODUCTION

All pupils at St Mark's CE Primary School have an equal right to develop and achieve their potential. Equality of opportunity underpins the school curriculum and the work of the school. Children are treated as individuals with their own abilities, difficulties, attitudes, backgrounds and experiences. We recognise that all pupils are of equal worth regardless of cultural/ethnic background, religion, social circumstances, gender, ability and disability.

At St Mark's CE Primary School, we strive to achieve an atmosphere of trust and respect among children as well as between teachers and children. The children are taught about how we should treat each other and, more importantly, how we learn to respect one another and ourselves as citizens of the world. The school also fosters an understanding of the diversity of cultures and needs that exist in school and in the wider community.

Our vision is applied across all policies and guides our work: **Loving God - Serving others - Flourishing together**. Our school values are extremely important in supporting and guiding us in our actions and interactions with others. Our school values are verbs. They are things we do to help us live out our vision, to: **Respect, Aspire, Rejoice**. This policy has the school vision and values at its heart and promotes equality and the rejoicing in diversity.

CHILDREN

It is the right of every child irrespective of race, culture, class, religious belief, gender, gender-identity, special needs, disability or ability to achieve their full potential. Each child should have access to an education, which will enable them to utilise their talents to the full and achieve their potential. We must develop children to become sensitive to, and aware of, ways in which equality of opportunity is denied and how this might affect them in society.

STAFF and GOVERNORS

It is the responsibility of all staff and governors to foster and facilitate this ideal by creating a welcoming environment for all children. They will endeavour to establish an atmosphere within school which effectively reduces prejudice and bias, and raises self-esteem, so that all children can develop independence, freedom of choice and a knowledge of their right to take on whatever roles they choose, no matter what their cultural background, gender or ability. As a staff we have to remember that we are role models. We must challenge the concept of discrimination based upon differences of, for example and not limited to; race, gender and special need and disability.

AIMS

To ensure that, in line with British Values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs):

- Every individual within the school achieves their full potential & has the same opportunities.
- Every child is given access to the best possible level of achievement appropriate to its age and ability through appropriately scaffolded or adapted work.
- Prejudices are challenged and positive attitudes are built.
- Understanding and mutual respect of all children, regardless of differences, is promoted.
- Contributions from various cultures are included and acknowledged in the planning and teaching of the full range of National Curriculum subjects, resources and school displays, in order to prepare children for life in a culturally diverse society.
- An awareness of the unfairness and injustice of stereotyping is raised.
- Any form of bullying including verbal, physical and psychological bullying by any group or individuals is challenged and addressed.
- High levels of acceptable group and individual behaviour are promoted by ensuring that all the school community are informed of school expectations and procedures.
- Absences, racist incidents and bullying incidents are recorded and monitored.

EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES used in school that will carry out these aims are:

- Planning activities of a non-stereotypical nature such as the role play, curriculum stimulus opportunities and apparatus.
- Giving children time to talk in class discussions to give everyone opportunity to voice opinion and discuss how they are feeling.
- Encouraging the sharing of experiences - encompassing all equality issues.
- Reviewing/updating resources so that appropriate messages are presented to the children.
- Planning role-play experiences to include addressing age, disability, race and gender.
- Displays around school promoting positive equality issues.
- Providing an entitlement curriculum, which aims to offer the same balanced curriculum and learning experiences to all.
- Staff on playground duty are proactive in identify children on their own, assertive groups and any negative physical contact.
- Children encouraged to think negative effect excluding others can have.
- Involving children in decision-making in the classroom and also at a whole school level through the School Council, Worship Council and other pupil voice forums.
- Using collective worship time and themes to reinforce equal opportunity issues.
- Using targets and rewards for children to reinforce acceptable behaviour and attitudes.
- Ensuring that all children will have equal access to all resources. Some children will need encouragement / direction in the use of resources.
- Subject leaders to address equality issues within their subject.
- Sharing in various religious celebrations throughout the year.

THE CURRICULUM

All children will have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life. We will need to monitor our practices to achieve this. Children should be given the opportunity:

- To make choices without rejecting any as being inappropriate, e.g. sport, monitor jobs.
- To gain self-worth and self-confidence, freeing them to develop a sense of who they are and what they want.
- To have equal educational experiences so that they can make appropriate choices from a base of common skills and knowledge.

RESOURCES

Books, equipment and other resources will be checked to see that they are non-stereotyping. Children will be encouraged to learn to identify and question stereotypes if they are found in existing material. Resources such as computers, technology equipment and playground space will be allocated fairly.

RACIAL EQUALITY

Key priorities:

- To **Respect**, value and **Rejoice** in individuality and difference.
- To acknowledge individuality and difference as key strengths in enabling our community to **Flourish together**.
- To prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.
- To make the school a place where EVERYONE feels welcome and valued.
- To promote good relations between different racial and cultural groups within the school and the wider community.
- To ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained.
- To acknowledge the existence of racism and bias and take steps to prevent it.
- To be proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

GENDER EQUALITY

The school promotes gender equality and endeavours to eliminate all unlawful sex discrimination and harassment. Conditions for learning (e.g. environment, teaching and learning, resources, social and emotional aspects of learning) provide equal access and opportunities to both boys and girls.

Teachers should: a) seek to organise the children to work together in mixed groups so they are less likely to develop antagonistic attitudes (b) ensure that areas in the classroom do not become a predominantly male or female domain, e.g. home corner, construction area

DISABILITY

The aim of our school is to ensure that wherever possible, disabled people have the same opportunities as non-disabled people in their access to education.

All children are given the opportunity to recognise and respect individual differences and abilities. We are all unique and therefore have the right to be treated as individuals.

We will endeavour to:

- Raise awareness of the varying needs of others.
- **Respect**, value and **Rejoice** in individuality and difference.
- Raise awareness of the need for appropriate facilities to be available for people with disabilities, e.g. wheel chair ramps.

This will be achieved through: appropriate discussions, topic links, e.g. work on the body, visiting speakers, appropriate resources, e.g. positive images in books/stories/displays and by following the SEND & Inclusion policy.

There may be occasions where the treatment of disabled children is different from non-disabled students through necessity e.g. health and safety, the interest of other pupils, practicalities. In such cases the school must be able to demonstrate that such treatment is justified and demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to avoid the disabled pupil being placed at a disadvantage. Careful consideration should be given to how participation could be facilitated.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Any concerns or complaints about discrimination should be highlighted to school staff without delay, for investigation and resolution. Further details about how to raise a concerns or make a complaint can be found in the [school's complaints procedure](#).

SUMMARY

All who work in school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

STAFF & GOVERNORS WILL TACKLE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION