



The Bishops' Blue Coat Church of England High School

Equality and Diversity Policy

All of the policies that shape our lives and daily practice at Bishops` are informed by our Christian vision and values: to know, nurture and inspire our students to be the best version of themselves, so that they can live
'Life in all its fullness' (John 10: 10)

Is this policy statutory?	Yes
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Committee	Resources

Contents

1.	Statement of Intent	3
2.	The Legal Framework	3
3.	Roles and Responsibilities	4
	The Governing Body will:.....	4
	The Headteacher will:.....	4
	Employees will:	4
	Students will:	5
4.	Tackling Discrimination.....	5
5.	Monitoring and Evaluation	6
6.	Dissemination	7
7.	Enforcement	7
8.	Appeals	7
9.	Appendix – Annual Accessibility Plan	7

1. Statement of Intent

The Bishops' Blue Coat Church of England High School is founded on the Christian values that all are loved and equal in the sight of God. As a matter of Christian principle and in accordance with our foundation, we will:

- respect the equal human rights of all our students
- educate them about equality and
- respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents, and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, or socio-economic background or any protected characteristic. We aim to create 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.

Our aims are:

To provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment in which the school and the home are educational partners, and in which all children will be encouraged:

- To develop their potential as unique individuals.
- To develop an awareness of their own self-worth in order that they might become responsible and self-disciplined members of society.
- To become active and independent participants in the learning process.
- To develop self-motivation and pride in their work.

Equality objectives:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

2. The Legal Framework

The Equality and Diversity Policy of The Bishops' High School has been developed in line with: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Human Rights Act 1998, Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations 1999, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, Specific Duties Regulations 2011.

Exceptions for Church of England schools/academies. The Equality Act 2010 includes some exceptions for schools/academies with a designated religious character, such as The Bishops' Blue Coat CE High School.

As a Church of England Academy: Priority may be given in admissions to members of the Church of England or another religion. There are permitted exceptions on how education is provided to students and access is given to other aspects of school life which are not necessarily part of the curriculum. For example, organising visits for students to sites of particular interest to the Church of England school, such as a cathedral, is not discriminating unlawfully by not arranging trips to sites of significance to the faiths of other students.

These exceptions are to allow Church of England schools/academies to conduct themselves in a way which is compatible with their religious ethos. But the Equality Act does not permit less favourable treatment of a student because they do not (or no longer) belong to the Church of England. Nor does it allow schools to discriminate on religious grounds in other respects, such as excluding a student or subjecting a student to any other detriment.

Exception for staff and prospective staff. Schools/academies that were Voluntary Aided schools prior to conversion to Academy status: may apply religious criteria when recruiting or dismissing any member of their teaching staff, in considering dismissals, may have regard to any conduct that is incompatible with the precepts, or with the upholding of the tenets, of the religion of the school, may not apply any religious criteria to any other posts unless there is a genuine occupational requirement.

Acts of worship. There is a general exception to the religion or belief provisions which allows all schools to have acts of worship or other forms of collective religious observance. This means the daily act of collective worship is not covered by the religion or belief provisions. Church of England schools/academies should provide a daily act of collective worship in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

Additional Guidance:

[Distinctive and Inclusive - The National Society and Church of England Schools 1811 - 2011](#)

[Flourishing for All: Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools September 2024 \(amended April 2025\)](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish equality objectives.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are developed with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Ensure that the Admissions Policy does not discriminate.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the Governing Body.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The Headteacher will:

- Implement the Policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and continuous professional development.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors, and contractors are aware of and are following the provisions of this Policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.
- Produce an annual report on the progress of implementing the provisions of this Policy.

Employees will:

- Not discriminate.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying in the school and report any major breaches of the Policy to the Headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the school's curriculum and culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor students' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.

- Keep up to date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Students will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other student or staff member
- Actively encourage equality and in school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to their Form Tutor, Head of Year or to any member of staff.
- Abide by all the School's Equality and Diversity Policies, Procedures and Codes.

4. Tackling Discrimination

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion, or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as protected characteristics.

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.

Discriminatory incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to form teacher for students and line manager / headteacher for an incident involving a staff member.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and - according to guidance from the Government and ACAS - pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as clients or customers. For an employer to be liable:

- the harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment).
- it must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and
- it must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under The Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare their treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under The Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments and is then systematically excluded from all meetings; such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis by the Headteacher and the Governing Body in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data. *Students Committee*
- Equal opportunities recruitment data. *Resources Committee*
- Equality impact assessments. *To each committee as relevant.*
- Ofsted inspection judgements. *To the full governing board.*
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying. *Students Committee*

Review of progress and impact

In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Policy and Plan annually and review the entire action plan on a three-year cycle.

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

How we conduct equality impact assessment

Whenever any policy documentation or other school procedures and practices in relation to students are reviewed, we will consider any potential impact in terms of protected characteristics.

Publishing the plan

The Equality and Diversity Policy, Annual Impact and Objectives are:

- Published on the school website
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff training
- Make sure hard copies are available

How we chose our equality objectives

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:

- from the equality impact assessments listed above,

- from the following data
 - Data on ethnicity, religion or belief and socio-economic background collected and compared with local and national data
 - Attainment and progress data for all groups of students
 - Attendance Data for all groups of students

6. Dissemination

We will take steps to communicate this Policy and Annual equality objectives in an accessible format on the school website.

7. Enforcement

Staff members and students who do not comply with the provisions of this Policy may be subject to the Bishops' High School's Disciplinary Procedures.

8. Appeals

Staff members retain the right to appeal against an equality or diversity-based decision using The Bishops' Blue Coat Church of England High School's staff grievance procedure.

9. Appendix – Annual Accessibility Plan

[Annual Accessibility Plan](#)