



# EQUALITY POLICY

## Our School Vision

**Our school offers a supportive, inclusive, nurturing and inspiring learning environment, where each member is known, loved and empowered to reach their full potential. Children are encouraged through an aspirational and engaging curriculum to develop their knowledge, skills and character so that they can truly flourish, both now and into the future.**

## **Introduction**

This single policy replaces separate policies the school has on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It reflects the legal duties set out in the **Equality Act 2010** and **no statutory guidance** set out by the government in December 2011 and March 2012. Part One sets out the school's aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Act; Part Two sets out the legal duties which are referred to in Part One.

## **PART 1**

Every person in our school community has been made in the image of God and is loved unconditionally by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community. 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. We are committed to promoting the understanding of the principles and practices of equality – treating all members of our school community as individuals, according to their needs, with an awareness of our diverse society and appreciating the value of difference. We actively seek to challenge discrimination and we promote an anti-bullying stance which makes clear the unacceptability of racist, disablist and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language.

## **AIMS**

1. St Laurence will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics (age, race, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, gender, sexual orientation) within the school community
2. We will actively promote mutual respect for all staff and pupils, and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
3. We value each pupil's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school. We will help pupils understand and value the diversity that surrounds them and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
4. We will regularly consider ways in which the curriculum is taught and will take reasonable steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, thus enabling all pupils to participate as fully as possible in all the activities of the school.
5. In planning the curriculum and resources, the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.
6. Staff will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is not their first language.
7. Bullying and Prejudice Related incidents will be carefully monitored and dealt with effectively. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.
8. We will seek the views of pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the school, to ensure that the school environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all school users. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed biennially.

9. We will ensure that all staff are aware of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, the different forms of discrimination and what 'reasonable adjustments' mean in practice.
10. The school will work with stakeholders, i.e. pupils, parents/carers, staff, the Church and relevant community groups to establish and share equality objectives. This Policy will be made available on the school's website.
11. We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotions and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone. The school values diversity amongst the staff and encourages those who are currently under-represented.

## **Part 2 – Legal Duties**

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, gender identity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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.

Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010. This legislation covers employment (work), the provision of services and public functions, and education.

Employers (schools) are liable for discriminatory acts of their employees if they did not take reasonable steps to prevent such acts. Employees can be liable for acts (where an employer took reasonable steps to prevent such acts).

### **The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are:**

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated

### **Prohibited Conduct' (acts that are unlawful):**

- **Direct discrimination** - Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** - A provision, criteria or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- **Harassment** - Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.

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- **Victimisation** - Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a complaint) brought in connection with this Act.
- **Discrimination arising from disability** - Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) **and failure to make reasonable adjustments.**
- **Gender re-assignment discrimination** - Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purpose of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision such as sick leave.
- **Pregnancy/maternity related discrimination** - Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a woman or girl because she is breastfeeding.
- **Discrimination by association or perception** - For example, discriminating against someone because they “look gay”, or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative.

**Public Sector Duties (applies to schools):**

A school must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to (in relation to protected characteristics above):

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined further in the Equality Act 2010 as having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages
- Take steps to meet different needs
- Encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.

## **Accessibility**

Some children in our school have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. The school fully meets the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in 2005.

Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, or modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

Schools are required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.
- Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will
  - Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum
  - Improve the physical environment
  - Improve provision of information.

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The school will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make.

## **Gender equality**

We recognise that nationally, the achievement of boys is falling behind that of girls. We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible in our school.

We aim to put in place a number of measures to raise the achievement of the boys. These include:

- dealing with negative aspects of boys' behaviour, including bullying and name-calling;
- removing gender bias from our resources;
- making sure that our displays reflect boys and men as effective learners and achievers;
- encouraging boys to read fiction;
- making our teaching more accessible to boys.

We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to performance. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve the boys' attainment do not do so at the expense of achievement by the girls.

## **Racial Equality**

See attached Appendix 1

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The role of Trustees**

- To ensure that the school complies with equality-related legislation.
- To ensure that the policy and its procedures are implemented by the Headteacher
- To ensure all other school policies promote equality.
- Have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.

The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this, we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

### **The role of the headteacher**

- To implement the policy and its related procedures.
- Make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Take appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff. It is unlawful for an employer to enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties. Schools should no longer require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire. Neither should a school seek out past sickness records until they have made a job offer.
- Ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.
- The headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.

### **All Staff**

- Enact this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.
- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds.

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- Attend such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.
- To be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions.
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism and ensure these are brought to the immediate attention of the headteacher.

### **Pupils**

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

### **Visitors (e.g. parent helpers, contractors)**

- To be aware of, and comply with, the school's equality policy.
- To refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour (for example, racist language) on school premises.

### **Links to other policies and documentation**

We ensure that the principles listed above apply to all of our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- Teaching styles and strategies
- SMSC and PSHE
- Admissions and attendance
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Special educational needs
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Bullying and addressing prejudice related bullying
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community
- We also ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are included in our school development plan, self-evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

### **Staff development and training**

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

### **Breaches of the policy**

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

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the headteacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;

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- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from protected characteristic groups are not unfairly treated.



## **Glossary**

**Equality:** This is more clearly defined as equality of opportunity and outcome, rather than equality of treatment. This means treating people fairly and according to their needs as some people may need to be treated differently in order to achieve an equal outcome.  
**Inclusive** Making sure everyone can participate, whatever their background or circumstances.

**Diversity:** Recognising that we are all different. Diversity is an outcome of equality and inclusion.

**Cohesion:** People from different backgrounds getting on well together (good community relations). There is a shared vision and sense of purpose or belonging. Diversity is valued. Relationships are strong, supportive and sustainable. Cohesion is an outcome of equality and inclusion.

**Community:** From the school's perspective, the term "community" has a number of meanings:

- The school community – the students we serve, their families and the school's staff.
- The community within which the school is located – in its geographical community, and the people who live and/or work in that area.
- The community of Britain – all schools by definition are part of it.
- The global community – formed by European and international links.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Racial equality**

- 3.1 In our school, and in accordance with Christian values, we will:
- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
  - promote equality of opportunity;
  - promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups.
- 3.2 It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see policies for Racial Equality and for Behaviour and Discipline).
- 3.3 We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. Thus, for example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in school. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.
- 3.4 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

## Appendix 2

### Equality Objective 1

The progress of disadvantaged pupils, SEN pupils is at least good.

<p>Why we have chosen this objective:</p> <p>We need to ensure that all groups of children make good progress in Reading, Writing, Maths and GPS in all year groups.          The disadvantaged gap although closing, by the end of the Key Stage and now needs to exceed national expectation.          SEN progress needs to be at least in line with those nationally.</p>
<p>To achieve this objective we plan to:</p> <p>4.1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Across the curriculum subject leaders will track the achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>2. Pupil progress meetings will continue to hold teachers to account for different groups of pupils termly.</li> <li>3. Rigorous tracking of pupils by SLT, Middle leaders and Subject leaders.</li> <li>4. Catch up groups will include those children who are disadvantaged with the greatest gaps.</li> </ol> <p>4.2 SEN / Disadvantaged Pupils</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SM (SENCO) to devise an action plan to continue to improve and evaluate SEN provision.</li> <li>2. SEN pupils tracked and monitored as part of termly pupil progress meetings.</li> <li>3. To continue to develop the effectiveness of TAs through targeted CPD with a focus on questioning.</li> <li>4. To establish the school as a 'THRIVE' school where significant support is available to support children's mental health and developmental needs.</li> <li>5. To continue to develop the TAs mentoring role within school.</li> <li>6. To enable children with a reading or language difficulty to access the curriculum through Communicate and Print.</li> <li>7. Staff to have training on Zones of Regulation to help children with behavioural difficulties to self-regulate their behaviour.</li> <li>8. A dedicated nurture room 'The Ark' is staffed by a Pastoral Support TA and Assistant who support the SEMH needs of children through interventions and break time support</li> <li>9. The FLO supports children and families in times of need and facilitates access to support networks</li> <li>10. Two staff are ELSA trained and undertake interventions with children to support mental health</li> <li>11. The school subscribes to OneGoal Mental Health Champions as a discrete programme of teaching to support understanding of good mental health and how to develop and maintain it.</li> <li>12. The school works closely with the NELFT (NHS) mental health and family support team to provide support and counselling for parents and children</li> </ol>
<p>Progress we are making towards this objective:</p> <p>Gap between National disadvantaged and our disadvantaged pupils has reduced in some years groups but not all. The impact of COVID can still be seen in the very low starting points of children coming into Y3 (Sept 23 baseline data shows 6% combined ARE in WRM)          Strategies are in place to increase the percentage of pupils achieving better than expected progress – a robust feedback policy, teaching for mastery, metacognition approach and clear strategies for practise and retrieval skills.</p>

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The school has decided upon the THRIVE approach to supporting children's emotional needs and will be training a THRIVE practitioner to access to a wide area of additional support strategies for our pupils. All Y3 and other vulnerable pupils will have a THRIVE assessment to ascertain gaps in early development and whole class strategies to target these are being put into place.

An in school tutor is used to support identified vulnerable children.

## Equality Objective 2

To improve attendance so that overall attendance is closer to 97% for all groups of pupils. To close the gap for attendance of FSM and SEN pupils.

Why we have chosen this objective:				
SEN pupils and Pupil Premium pupils do have at least 95% attendance. Most of our persistent absent pupils are Pupil Premium or SEN pupils.				
To achieve this objective we plan to:				
Target attendance 2023-25 to be closer to 96% and above for all pupils. 2.5 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pastoral support for poor attendees through the ELSA and Pastoral Support teams</li> <li>2. Counselling provided for pupils with severe emotional issues that affect attendance.</li> <li>3. FLO to work closely with families that have persistent absenteeism.</li> <li>4. Whole school rewards for good punctuality and attendance to continue. Punctuality Penguin and Attendance Alligator awards.</li> <li>5. Minibus morning pick-ups for those in need.</li> <li>5. Provision of Breakfast Club for working parents</li> <li>6. Wide variety of free after school clubs</li> </ol>				
Progress we are making towards this objective:				
<b>Attendance and Absence</b>	<b>2023-24</b> 2022-23 in red	School Overall	PP	SEN
	Attendance %	91.6% 92.9% National Average 92%	89.3% 91.1%	84.5% 85.1%
	Unauthorised Abs %	2.6% 1.96%		
	Authorised Abs %	5.8% 5.9%		
Premium pupils and in particular our SEN children within this group are still not achieving at least 95% attendance. Covid continues to have a significant impact on attendance.				

### Equality Objective 3

To continue to promote equality of opportunity and diversity through spiritual, moral, cultural development and promotion of fundamental British Values.

<p><b>Why we have chosen this objective:</b></p> <p>We have a minority of pupils who are EAL or who are from different ethnic groups in school (only 8% of our pupils) however we have a significant group of pupils whose first language is English and have moved to the UK from other countries (Nigeria for example) We want to continue to ensure that our children are tolerant of other faiths and of others who are different in either race, gender or beliefs. We have 2 children with a physical disability.</p>
<p><b>To achieve this objective we plan to:</b></p> <p>2.4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New behaviour policy embedded within school which will develop resilience and moral, cultural and spiritual development across the curriculum. Restorative Justice embedded within school used as an approach which encourages all to take responsibility for their own actions and consider carefully the impact of actions on others.</li> <li>2. Curriculum opportunities will provide further opportunities for children to embrace cultural diversity and difference. It is embedded in our medium term plans and teachers ensure diverse imagery is used in lesson resources which represents the diversity in our school.</li> <li>3. Opportunities will be provided for children to visit other places of worship i.e. synagogue, mosque.</li> <li>4. Spirituality is further developed through re-visiting our vision and linking school motto to a biblical reference. All our values are linked to the story of The Lost Sheep. Children are given opportunities to develop spirituality through an 'up, down, in, out' approach.</li> <li>5. Global Advocacy projects will provide opportunities for children to challenge inequality, injustice and exploitation (local or global).        Collective Worship themes include diversity, British Values and LGBT+</li> <li>6. Children with disabilities have access to the full curriculum and progress well in the school.</li> <li>7. Training for those adults working with hearing/visual impaired children and diabetes.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Progress we are making towards this objective:</b></p> <p>EAL pupils with parents that do not speak English to have letters translated and an interpreter used for meetings. Children have opportunities to share and celebrate their own cultures        Children with disabilities are actively involved in all aspects of school life- they are happy, feel safe and progress well.        CW themes of diversity, British Values and LGBT+ are planned into our own bespoke CW plan taking into account the needs of the community        Worship Shepherds children's group plan and deliver CW using 'Picture News' resource which uses current world and national events to explore themes of BVs and Spirituality        School Council is established and the value of democracy evidenced through their work in the school. Pupils voices are heard through these groups and opportunities to communicate through worry pots and prayer boxes.        The Big Question is displayed in the hall each term – children are encouraged to respond.</p>