



St Faith's

Church of England
Infant and Nursery School

Equal Opportunities Policy

"Our inclusive St Faith's family strives to enable all to achieve their full potential and inspire a community of hope and friendship. We seek excellence by ensuring a safe, respectful and flourishing learning community, where differences are celebrated and our genuine love and high expectations make a difference to all."

Oscar Romero "Aspire not to have more, but to be more."

As a Church School, the distinctive Christian values of respect, compassion, trust, justice, friendship and community are promoted through the experiences we offer to all our pupils, to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding that they require to lead confident, healthy and independent lives. We promote the teaching and understanding of fundamental British values in order to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. We positively teach the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. Teaching the fundamental British values helps the children to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of **equal opportunities** in our school. It reflects the consensus of opinion of all members of staff. It is based on current practice and has the full agreement of the governing body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher, teachers and support staff. It is our collective responsibility to raise awareness and that policies are known, understood and used in an appropriate way.

The school takes account of the national perspective with which children live currently and within which they will live and work in the future, to ensure that they are educated to become members of a wider British, European and international community. Anti-discrimination laws in the United Kingdom are designed to eliminate discrimination in employment and education on the grounds of race and sex.

Aims

In accordance with the Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, at St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School, we do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff, pupil, Governor, parent or carer, student or volunteer, on the grounds of their:

- a) age
- b) disability
- c) gender reassignment
- d) marriage and civil partnership
- e) pregnancy and maternity
- f) race
- g) religion or belief
- h) sex
- i) sexual orientation

- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all, through the education we provide in school.
- We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

Equal Opportunities – Gender

We aim, within St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School, to provide equality of opportunity for all children, whatever their gender. We want all of our pupils to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes and practices, in particular those relating to gender, do not prevent any child from reaching their potential. We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by their environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and confidence by positively working to reduce any gender bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

At the same time, we are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of stereotypical gender roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer groups and the media. Certain strategies are employed to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all the life and work of the school.

Children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes both the Programmes of Study for the National Curriculum subjects, other subject areas currently outside the National Curriculum and activities such as extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom. They are equally encouraged to have a voice in roles such as School Council, Worship Council, Sport Leaders and Digital Leaders. We do not require an equal balance of boys and girls for these roles. Some roles are elected democratically by their classmates.

- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching, learning materials and our teaching styles.
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias. From starting school, pupils are encouraged to play and engage with all equipment/toys and no prejudice or remarks are made.
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls.
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes.
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes.

Teaching and other groupings such as Collective Worship seating, lining up, classroom seating and playground areas are organised based on criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship, class, year group.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving or delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.

- Our Social and Emotional Communication Policy (School Behaviour Policy) discipline procedures, notably rewards and sanctions, are the same for both sexes.
- Our school uniform reflects equality of opportunity for all children.
- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect.

Any differences involving gender, which arise inside or outside the classroom, are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

All teaching and non-teaching posts are not sex specific. Both men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups and each key stage. All staff have equal access to continued professional development opportunities and posts of responsibility. All members of staff regularly review practices and approaches involving equal opportunity in terms of gender issues.

Equal Opportunities – Disabilities

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 groups of children within our school. The school fully meets the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 2015*. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to children with no disability.

In concordance with the School's SEND Policy, St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School is an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children.

At St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School we strive to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations.
- require different strategies for learning.
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates.
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Due regard is always made to accommodate the needs of all pupils, including those with physical or emotional disabilities. The school is committed to providing an environment, within its resources, that allows disabled children full access to all areas of learning.

This includes:

- Making physical adaptation to the school layout e.g. ramps, widening corridors/door entrances.
- Providing disabled toilets, changing facilities and shower facilities.
- Specialist desks, chairs and other furniture/equipment as and when necessary for pupils with specific physical needs.
- Conducting sensory audits and reacting to the recommendations e.g. using fabric on display boards to soften the sounds.
- Working with outside agencies such as Autism Outreach, Hearing Impairment teams or Speech and Language, to ensure that all pupils' needs are being successfully supported.

Teachers modify teaching and learning expectations as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, they may modify teaching materials or the classroom layout or offer additional adult support. In their planning, teachers ensure that they give children with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers ensure that the work undertaken by disabled children is reasonably adjusted and:

- takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use.
- takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, visual aids.
- is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment or use certain types of materials.
- allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies.
- includes approaches and resources that allow hearing-impaired and visually impaired children to access all curriculum subject areas.
- uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities.

Equal Opportunities – Race

In accordance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, we aim, at St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School, to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices, in particular those relating to race, do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by their environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any race bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

Our school values the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. Within this ethos of achievement, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. The school will follow the LA guidelines in dealing with incidents of racial harassment.

We aim to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society and ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people. We aspire to prepare all children for life in a multi-cultural society, building upon the strengths and richness of cultural diversity.

To do this we must ensure that:

- a) Each person retains the security and self-confidence deriving from their own culture while their ability to participate fully in the community as a whole.
- b) Groups achieve recognition of their identity as valued elements within diverse but mutually supportive society.
- c) We recognise that racism affects everyone by preventing the individual's full development and to acknowledge that tackling racism is everyone's responsibility.
- d) We provide for all of the individual needs of the learners, having regard to their ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural and historical background.
- e) We ensure that the learning experience is free from bias in its portrayal of either ethnic minorities or the majority culture.
- f) We have a wide range of texts and story books that reflects our diverse community.
- g) We raise the achievement and attainment levels of ethnic minority learners in all areas of the curriculum.
- h) We monitor and evaluate this policy and effect appropriate changes as and when necessary.
- i) We promote a positive ethos based on our school values and other values such as empathy and understanding which contribute to racial harmony, justice, equity and equality.
- j) We ensure that all staff have access to Equal Opportunities training, as required.
- k) Display work within the school should actively promote race equality.
- l) We work closely with EMTET (Ethnic Minorities and Traveller Education Team) to support our families.

Any incident of racial harassment is unacceptable at St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School. Incidents could take the form of physical assault, verbal abuse, damage to a pupil's property or lack of cooperation in a lesson, due to the ethnicity of a pupil.

Any adult witnessing an incident or being informed about an incident must follow these agreed procedures:

- stop the incident and comfort the pupil who is the victim.
- reprimand the aggressor and inform the victim what action has been taken.
- if the incident is witnessed by other pupils, tell them why it is wrong.
- report the incident to the head teacher or SLT and inform her of the action taken.
- inform the class teacher(s) of both the victim and the aggressor, then record what happened on CPOMS.
- inform both sets of families, if appropriate.

All racist incidents will now be recorded and reported to the governing body by the head teacher.

Equal Opportunities - Religious or Belief.

Although our school is deemed as a specific religious or faith school, children of all faiths or no faith may apply for a place at our school and the 'faith' criteria no longer features in the procedure.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE or Collective Worship in accordance with our RE and Collective Worship Policies. The content of RE reflects the fact that religious traditions across the World are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented across the World.

We promote respect, sensitivity and cultural awareness by teaching about the religions represented in the region and the country. We develop the ability of pupils to think about and develop for themselves, beliefs and values by which they can live through, studying concepts like celebration, the sacred, authority, religious belief and lifestyle, and through exploring the fundamental questions of life.

Behaviour whereby children of faith or no faith have reason to feel threatened by actions or remarks that devalue their beliefs is not tolerated and is dealt with in line with our Social and Emotional Communication Policy.

Teaching staff routinely meet with families of different religious beliefs, to ensure that their child's needs are being met within school and parental wishes are followed at all times e.g. not attending church services.

Equal Opportunities in Action

At St Faith's we create a positive and respectful school culture in which staff know and care about pupils. It is an environment in which pupils feel safe, and in which bullying, discrimination and child-on-child abuse (online or offline) are not accepted and are dealt with quickly, consistently and effectively whenever they occur.

Admission

The school's admission policy does not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

Discrimination

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school are to be treated seriously. A careful note must be kept of such incidents, whether they take place in the playground, hall, corridors or teaching areas. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable.

Pupils

All incidents are referred to the Headteacher and consideration is given to involving the parents. Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

Staff

The school values diversity amongst staff. In all staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed, based upon strict professional criteria. All staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

Governing Body

The governing body seeks to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all groups, and they are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have. The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their age, disability, gender reassignment, parent's marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls.

If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

Parents/Carers

At St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School we treat all our parents and carers equally and fairly and we value and welcome their diversity. The Headteacher offers an open-door policy to parents who may want to share any concerns and any allegations of discrimination are dealt with either by the Headteacher or Governors. Parents with a disability that may cause their child to be absent from school or have difficulty getting the children to school, are fully supported and assisted, for example by the use of a taxi or collecting the child from the home or car.

The Curriculum

All pupils must have access to the school's curriculum. Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil. The curriculum must be balanced, objective and sensitive, and must reflect sexual and cultural diversity. Every effort will be made to ensure that the curriculum provided reflects the school's policy on respect, empathy and understanding and reflects our Christian values of friendship, respect,

community, compassion, trust and justice. Such a curriculum will then provide opportunities for all learners to achieve and for all others to value such achievements.

The school will aim to:

- Provide equal access to, and positive encouragement in, curriculum opportunities for all pupils.
- Encourage pupils and staff to question conscious or unconscious attitudes and assumptions in themselves and others, which might lead to prejudice.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the extent to which their own perceptions and unspoken expectations relating to the curriculum may influence pupil achievement.

Resources

Our school aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origins. Whenever possible, staff must ensure that the resources used in all curriculum areas are multicultural, multi-faith (in line with the agreed syllabus for RE) and non-sexist, containing positive images of all groups. Variety should be evident in the morals, stories and information offered to children. Pupils should have access to accurate information about similarities and differences between cultural groups. Our story books and non-fiction books in the library and classrooms reflect our diverse school community. These are continually being built upon and developed.

The Hidden Curriculum

The last few years have seen a wealth of new research studies which demonstrate convincingly the variety of ways in which some girls and boys, men and women, still wrongly believe that:

- education serves a different purpose for them depending on which sex they are.
- certain subjects/ activities are not suitable for them (e.g. boys are good at science, girls are good at reading).
- girls and women are inferior to boys and men.

At St Faith's Church of England Infant and Nursery School it is stressed that these forms of discrimination and stereotyping are for the most part quite unintentional but are, nevertheless, undesirable, unacceptable and harmful to the intellectual and social development of pupils.

As children grow older, their ideas of sex roles begin to be more influenced by factors beyond the home, the most significant of these influences being the school, the peer group and the media. Since the only factor controlled by teachers is the school, every effort is made to present a non-discriminatory environment. Many small but significant procedures can affect the development of a non-discriminatory environment.

These include:

- school organisation
- dress
- television, books and other learning materials
- discipline
- teacher attention
- adult role models

Visits, Community Projects, Out of School Activities

All educational visits are open to all pupils. All recreational, sport and social facilities and out of school activities are likewise equally available to all. All pupils are afforded equal access to all benefits, facilities and services provided by our school. Decisions on discipline and dress for all pupils have been made on non-discriminatory criteria.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The governing body does this by monitoring:

- the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils.
- the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against.
- the school Social and Emotional Policy, so that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

Governors require the Headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy. They take into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils.

Safeguarding procedures

At St Faith's we have a positive culture of safeguarding, with effective policies and procedures in place. Our safeguarding procedures are outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on our website <https://stfaithscofe.secure-primariesite.net/safeguarding-information-and-policies/>.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Approved by the governing body on:-	March 2025
Signed (Chair of Governors)	<i>Dave Vincent</i>
Signed (Headteacher)	<i>Amanda Konrath</i>
Review Date	March 2026