

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School



Equal Opportunities Policy

Date: March 2014

Date of next review: March 2016

Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs M Buller

Headteacher Signed:

Chair of Governors Signed:

St Thomas More Catholic Primary has an Equal Opportunities Policy in line with the Equal Opportunities Act 2010. This states that:

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

We also follow the guidelines on 'Positive Action' in the Equal Opportunities Act 2010 in relation to our curriculum.

New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. Previously a school providing – for example - special catch-up classes for Roma children or a project to engage specifically with alienated Asian boys might have been discriminating unlawfully by excluding children who didn't belong to these groups.

1. Introduction

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School promotes equal opportunities for all students. Equal Opportunities is about enabling every student to achieve their highest potential. We want every student to progress to the highest level of attainment and behaviour possible. We also recognise that we are part of a very diverse community and this is reflected continually in all aspects of school life ranging from the curriculum to staffing.

2. Aims

We will ensure that all students have full access to the national curriculum and to every aspect of the learning environment. All students regardless of class, race, religious beliefs,

gender, sexual orientation, and disability have the right to equal access and to achievement. This is reflected in our Vision Statement and Mission Statement.

Our Vision Statement for St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

To promote the formation of the complete person based on the example and inspiration of Jesus Christ and to help the pupils develop a personal relationship with God in their journey through life. To ensure every child shares in an educational environment filled with love and concern – a community joining together to help create a better world.

Our Mission Statement for St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

At St Thomas More we are dedicated to enabling each child to succeed through experiencing quality in:

- Prayer and community worship
- A broad and balanced curriculum
- An ethos of support, challenge and encouragement to succeed
- An enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits
- A stimulating learning environment
- A rich, varied and up to date range of learning resources
- Innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning
- Learning partnerships between school, home, parish and the wider world

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a believing and learning community by:

- Striving to ensure everyone leaves our school feeling individually fulfilled and valued as a member of our community.
- Recognising that we can learn from our mistakes
- Striving for continuous improvement in all that we do
- Working collaboratively towards common goals
- Valuing people above systems
- Respecting the beliefs of others
- Practising genuine forgiveness

3. Equal opportunities Implementation

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff and the Academy Committee. The learning environment demonstrates respect for the culture, experience, emotional and academic needs of every individual.

4. The Curriculum

All students have equal opportunities to participate in a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. The curriculum reflects awareness of the ability, ethnicity, gender experiences and needs of all students. It promotes understanding and valuing of ethnic difference and gender equality. The curriculum caters for all levels of attainment in its content and delivery. The curriculum enables students to develop concepts and skills to allow them to participate in social situations. Students are encouraged to value and to recognise traditions, values, beliefs and cultural influences within society.

5. Curriculum Plans

The curriculum relates to the background and experiences of all students. When planning the curriculum, care is taken to meet the range of ability, the multi-ethnic and gender needs of the class. The special needs of all students must also be taken into consideration. The differentiation of all learning materials is an integral part of this process.

6. Teaching and Learning

All staff must be aware of the different learning, language and special needs of all students within the school. Strategies are developed to address the learning experience and attainment levels of each student. Students may require varying levels of support. All students should receive support as and when appropriate. Our 'Wave' provision for SEN reflects this. Staff are expected to engage active participation of all students in lessons.

7. Resources

Resources should demonstrate the achievements of all people from all ethnic groups. Resources should be continually and critically assessed for any bias or stereotyping. Resources should be chosen for their positive, non-stereotypical representations of diverse groups. All resources should take account of the range of ability and the multi-ethnic and gender needs within the classroom.

8. Assessment

All methods of assessment should avoid ethnic or gender bias and should not disadvantage students with any disability. Every effort should be made to assess and comment on student attainment in relation to their achievement. Methods of assessment have to comply with National Curriculum requirements.

9. Using Names Correctly

It is fundamental to show respect for a person by using their name correctly. Information regarding naming conventions of different cultures should be made readily available. The correct name by which a person wishes to be addressed should be made available to staff.

10. Language

All forms of sexist, racist or personally offensive language and remarks from anyone within the school are unacceptable. Any such incidents will be dealt with according to the school's guidelines and recorded for monitoring purposes

11. School-Home Communication

This should be jargon-free and written in a clear manner. Staff should use correct titles and surnames. All letters and newsletters should reflect the whole school community and avoid stereotypical representations.

12. The Environment

The school environment reflects its commitment to equal opportunities. All displays should take account of the beliefs, class, ethnicity, gender, ability or disability of all its students, staff and visitors.

Accessibility Plan

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA).

Aim: To eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to enable full participation in for students with disabilities.

Compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act is consistent with St Thomas More Catholic Primary School's aims and Equal Opportunities Policy. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School recognises its duty under the Disability Discrimination Act:

- Not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- Not to treat disabled students less favourably.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to students' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment

St Thomas More Catholic Primary will continue to seek and follow advice of specialist teacher, advisors and inspectors and of health professionals.