



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS POLICY

Author of Policy  
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A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'R. J. Mca', is written over a horizontal line.

Signed on behalf of Governing Body

To be reviewed July 2015

ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY PLYMOUTH  
Pennycross, PLYMOUTH PL5 3NE

All Saints Church of England Academy, Plymouth aims to be an inspirational community of learning, which will transform the life chances of the students and make a positive contribution to the well-being of the local community and the wider world. The Academy is rooted in Christian values including truth, justice, forgiveness, generosity and respect. The Academy aims to provide outstanding educational opportunities and experiences which will enable all students, regardless of ability and background, to bring out the best in themselves, and to make a difference for good in the world.

The Academy believes that education is about the development of the whole person, and in educating each student will endeavour to:

- sharpen the mind
- enrich the imagination
- strengthen the body
- nourish the spirit
- encourage the will to do good
- open the heart to others

This policy and the associated procedures are based on these principles, aims and beliefs.

## Introduction

All Saints Academy, Plymouth is fully committed to equal opportunities for all members of the Academy.

Society in general consists of individual people who will only prosper where differences between them are tolerated and valued and where equality of opportunity is fully available to all. Any form of discrimination, prejudice or harassment prevents the fulfilment and progress of individuals and the community alike.

The Academy is an essential part of the local community. We value the diversity of people which enriches the Academy community. We are fully committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all those who use the Academy, whether for education, employment or recreation. Equal opportunity for all is a moral and legal right endorsed by legislation and the national curriculum.

## Purpose

The purpose is to:

- meet the statutory responsibility placed upon the Academy
- ensure that all members of the Academy have the best opportunity to fulfil their potential
- provide a secure, tolerant and positive environment that enables all members of the Academy to work and prosper free from harassment, prejudice and discrimination
- ensure that all students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate for their individual needs
- ensure that all members of the Academy have optimum access to the resources of the Academy
- foster tolerant and positive attitudes in all members of the Academy towards all people regardless of gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, ability, physical disability, age, religious belief and socio-economic circumstances
- establish strategies for challenging prejudice and combating discrimination and harassment of any form
- celebrate the diversity that exists within the Academy and the local community

## Procedure

In order that the rationale, aims and objectives of this policy document do not remain abstract, all members of the Academy must take practical steps to ensure its meaningful implementation. The following aspects must be considered:

### Within Learning Areas

- Staff must ensure that students with physical disabilities have access to and freedom of mobility around the classroom as far as possible. The needs of the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired students must be considered

- Teachers need to be aware of the implications of seating arrangements and groupings of students with particular regard to gender and ability. e.g. it may be beneficial to manipulate the groups so that boys and girls have opportunities to work together to share ideas and talents. At times, however, it may be that single sex groups provide an opportunity for positive encouragement and the development of individual confidence. Similarly, a variety of groupings on the basis of ability is to be encouraged so that each student has an opportunity to develop a positive self-image and meet with success.
- Teachers should employ a variety of strategies to ensure that all students have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the lesson e.g. the opportunity to answer questions is shared appropriately between boys and girls and differentiated in order to involve actively all students
- Staff and students need to work towards furthering an atmosphere of harmony so that everyone feels confident and comfortable in order that an optimum level of learning takes place. Any form of harassment, bullying, sexist, racist or other offensive language, should be challenged and immediately pursued in accordance with the Academy policies on bullying and the management of student behaviour.

#### Within the Curriculum all subject areas must ensure that:

- programmes of study, resources and materials are vetted to ensure that they provide positive images of race and gender, avoiding traditional stereotypes and present good role models
- lessons are suitably differentiated to provide opportunities for all groups to experience and realise success and achievement
- Lessons and materials should not show bias of interest to any particular gender.

Each subject area must consider how the issues raised in this policy apply or can be interpreted within its subject areas.

#### Within the Learning Curriculum

- Equal opportunities must be an integral part of the whole Academy curriculum, both academic and pastoral
- Issues concerning equal opportunities should be covered regularly, at least every year within the Personal Development course; stereotypes and discrimination must be challenged and positive role models and images promoted
- Assemblies need to be monitored carefully for content and balance. It is desirable that:
  - there is a balance between the sexes of those leading assemblies;
  - issues relating to both sexes are raised and given equal profile;
  - both girls and boys are given an equal opportunity to participate where appropriate e.g. answering questions, reading prayers etc.
- Discrimination and stereotyping, particularly of race and gender must be challenged and positive images promoted.

## Social Background

Staff should be aware that students come from a variety of family structures and do not necessarily come from the traditional nuclear family. Sensitivity should be shown when addressing these issues.

Students also come from differing social backgrounds, with differing expectations and financial support. These factors can either be an advantage or a disadvantage to their education and affect the degree to which they can participate in the life of this Academy.

This Academy is committed to raising the expectations of the students, their families and the community at large. We seek to broaden horizons and provide opportunities for personal development.

In planning programmes of study and activities, staff should ensure that disadvantages, particularly through lack of finance are minimised.

e.g. we should provide:

- quiet areas within the Academy in which students can study
- enriching activities where possible at nil or low cost
- music tuition and loan of instruments free of charge
- advice and support particularly in Careers and Educational Guidance to enable students and members of the community to gain personal fulfilment.

## The Environment

We should ensure that:

- all students and staff have optimum use of the Academy buildings and surroundings
- no group feels excluded from any playground area, particularly because of age, gender or disability
- students and staff care for the environment so that all can benefit from pleasant surroundings both inside and outside the buildings
- we recognise how important it is for work to be displayed
- a range of display methods and materials is used to ensure that presentation is always of a high standard and reflects the individual student's work in the best possible light
- when the work is selected for display it should reflect the gender balance and ability range of the Academy
- posters and displays do not reinforce stereotyping of any kind, but illustrate positive attitudes
- this policy, combined with our Behaviour policy and the Anti-Bullying policy, makes a positive contribution to the Academy's emotional environment where students can feel comfortable and accepted.

## Academy approach

In our whole Academy approach to Equal Opportunities for students, we should try to ensure that:

- in tutor groups there is a balance of gender, ability and talent
- subject areas consider very carefully the constitution of teaching groups, bearing in mind gender and ability. Where groups are set, subject areas should be able to justify their decisions based on student performance
- as a co-educational Academy, the balance of gender is maintained in each year group
- when students choose their subjects, they are encouraged to make informed decisions based on their ability, future aspirations and interests, uninfluenced by stereotyped expectations
- student performance, particularly in public examinations, should be monitored and where significant disparities arise they are investigated.

## Resources

- Equal Opportunities Incident Report Form