



**CORPUS CHRISTI
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Equality Policy

FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, VISITORS AND OTHERS
COMING INTO CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL
December 2018

Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
3/12/2018	Jean Connery	Josephine Namusisi-Riley

INTRODUCTION

Corpus Christi is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

This policy accords with national legislation and the equal opportunity policies of the Archdiocese of Southwark and The Catholic Education Service. It is a general statement of our commitment to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equal opportunities and foster good relationships.

If you have any concerns regarding this policy, in the first instance please contact the headteacher. In the event that your concerns have not been resolved, further complaints will be dealt with under our complaints policy.

Please note that breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with as determined by the headteacher.

PART 1 – THE LAW

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of parliament and almost one hundred sets of regulations which had been introduced over several decades. It provides a single, consolidated source of equality law, covering all types of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are unlawful. It simplified the law by getting rid of anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time, and extended protection against discrimination in several areas.

THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Equality Act 2010 makes it is unlawful for the “responsible body” of Corpus Christito discriminate against (either directly or indirectly) an individual or group of individuals by treating them less favourably because they (or somebody they associate with) have one or more of the following characteristics:

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

The Equality Act 2010 also makes it unlawful for the “responsible body” of Corpus Christi to discriminate against (either directly or indirectly) an individual or group of individuals **who are not the school’s students** by treating them less favourably because they (or somebody they associate with) have one or more of the above characteristic or the following characteristics:

- Age; and
- Marriage and civil partnership.

Specifically, the “responsible body” of Corpus Christi must not discriminate against a student or group of students because they have a protected characteristic (with the exception of age or marriage and civil partnerships):

- In the arrangements it makes for deciding who is offered admission as a student;
- As to the terms on which it offers to admit a prospective student;
- By not admitting a prospective student;
- In the way it provides education for a student (but not in relation to the contents of the curriculum);
- In the way it affords a student access to a benefit, facility or service;
- By not providing an education for a student;
- By excluding a student;
- By subjecting a student to any other detriment (including the imposition of sanctions);

The Equality Act 2010 also makes it unlawful for the “responsible body” of Corpus Christi to harass or victimise an individual or group of individuals because of some of the protected characteristics, or because of something done in reliance on the Equality Act 2010, as outlined in further detail below.

The “responsible body” of Corpus Christi as an academy is its proprietor, namely the Governing Body. In practice, all persons acting on behalf of the Governing Body (including employees of the school) are personally responsible for ensuring that their actions or omissions are not discriminatory, and the Governing Body will also be responsible for the actions of the school’s employees if it cannot show that it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent the discriminatory actions or omissions being undertaken on their behalf.

The Equality Act 2010 covers discriminatory acts or omissions by the school against prospective students, current students and (in some circumstances) former students, as well as against parents (including non-parents with parental responsibility or care of a student), visitors and other people coming into contact with the school.

The Equality Act 2010 does not cover discriminatory acts by one student against another student, such as racist bullying (such behaviour by a student will, in any event, be a breach of the school’s Behaviour Policy and be sanctioned accordingly). However, if the school is aware of a discriminatory act by one student against another and does nothing to prevent it, or treats the act less seriously than it would for other acts, this may in itself be a discriminatory act by the school.

DISCRIMINATION

The Equality Act 2010 defines two types of discrimination; direct and indirect:

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where an individual or group of individuals are treated less favourably than others because they or somebody they associate with have (or it is mistakenly thought that they have) a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a policy, criteria or practice is applied generally to all, which has the indirect effect of discriminating against an individual or group of individuals by putting them at a disadvantage, unless there is a legitimate reason for the policy, criteria or practice and there is no other way to achieve it.

Disability Arising from Disability

There are special provisions in the Equality Act 2010 relating to disability discrimination and, in particular, a third type of discrimination called **discrimination arising from a disability**, as well as failing to make reasonable adjustments for an individual with a disability. The definition of what constitutes disability discrimination is more complex than that for the other protected characteristics, and is set out in further detail under the section relating to disability equality below.

HARASSMENT

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to harass an individual or group of individuals in relation to certain protected characteristics. Harassment is defined as an unwanted act, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Harassment only applies in relation to the following protected characteristics:

- Sex;
- Race;
- Religion or belief (in relation to those who are **not** students);
- Sexual orientation (in relation to those who are **not** students);
- Pregnancy or maternity;
- Disability; and
- Age (in relation to those who are **not** students).

Harassment does not apply to the otherwise protected characteristics of religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment in relation to students, however any discriminatory acts because of these characteristics are likely to be direct discrimination in any event.

VICTIMISATION

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to victimise an individual or a group of individuals in certain circumstances. Victimisation is defined as occurring when an individual or group of individuals are treated less favourably as a result of anything they have done in reliance upon the Equality Act 2010, for example by previously making an allegation of discrimination or harassment, even if it was not upheld.

Victimisation will also occur when an individual is treated less favourably as a result of anything their parent, sibling or other person has done in reliance upon the Equality Act 2010, for example where their older sibling has previously made an allegation of discrimination, even if it was not upheld.

POSITIVE ACTION

The Equality Act 2010 allows (but does not require) a school to take action to tackle disadvantages suffered by a particular group of students as a result of them having a protected characteristic, known as "positive action". This does not mean that the school can give a particular group of students preferential treatment (which would be positive discrimination and unlawful), it merely allows the school to put in place measures which redress the balance between those with the protected characteristic and those without.

The Equality Act 2010 does, however, allow for the school to treat disabled students more favourably than students who are not disabled (positive discrimination). In some cases, schools are *required* to treat disabled students more favourably than students who are not disabled, by making reasonable adjustments for their disability and providing auxiliary aids where necessary.

SEX EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) or harassed because of their sex or the sex of somebody they associate with.

Schools must not treat a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of their sex or the sex of somebody they associate with.

RACE EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) or harassed because of their race or the race of somebody they associate with. Race is defined as including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, and would also include travellers whose cultural heritage is traditionally nomadic, for example gypsies and Irish travellers.

Schools must ensure that a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of their race or the race of somebody they associate with. Segregation of students by race will always be unlawful.

RELIGION OR BELIEF EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) because of their religion or belief or the religion or belief of somebody they associate with. Religion is defined as being any religion, and belief as being any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief in religion (for example, humanism or atheism). Religion will include all of the major faiths, including denomination within the religion. Political beliefs are not included within the definition of religion or belief.

Schools must ensure that a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of their religion or belief or the religion or belief of somebody they associate with.

Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms provides:

- 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.*
- 2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.*

However, the Equality Act 2010 provides an exception from the prohibition on religion and belief discrimination in the provision of services in schools. For all schools the areas covered by the exception are:

- The curriculum, so as to allow schools to explore a full range of issues, ideas and materials, without fear of legal challenge, however the way the school delivers the curriculum to its students remains subject to the Equality Act 2010. However when organising visits, the School is not acting unlawfully if it does not organise visits for pupils of other faiths;
- Collective worship (to include the celebration of any religious festivals of the school's choosing without acting unlawfully by not celebrating festivals of other faiths; and having objects symbolic of the school's faith, such as a bible);
- School transport and the establishment; and
- Alteration and closure of schools.

For schools with a religious character the exceptions also apply to anything done in connection with admissions or in relation to the responsible body of such schools i.e. for Catholic schools the school's governing body. Corpus Christ is a designated Catholic School and is therefore permitted to give priority to applicants because of their faith within their admissions arrangements without breaching the religion or belief equality provisions.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) because of their sexual orientation, their parents' sexual orientation or the sexual orientation of somebody they associate with. Sexual orientation includes heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality.

Schools must ensure that a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of their sexual orientation or the sexual orientation of somebody they associate with.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) because of their gender reassignment. Gender reassignment is defined as applying to anyone who is currently undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process or part of a process of reassigning their sex to the opposite sex by changing their physical or other attributes. There is no requirement to undergo, or plan to undergo, a medical procedure – taking steps to live life as the opposite sex, or planning to live life as the opposite sex, is sufficient.

Schools must ensure that a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others because they, their parents or somebody that they associate with has undergone, is planning to undergo or is in the process of undergoing gender reassignment. Students must be included within a class of the sex that they identify with.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) because of pregnancy or maternity. Maternity is defined as

having had a baby within the preceding twenty-six week period, and includes breastfeeding. It is not discriminatory to treat an individual who is pregnant, has recently had a baby or is breastfeeding a baby more favourably than others who are not.

Schools must ensure that a student, parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than another student or group of students because they are pregnant, have recently had a baby or are breastfeeding a baby.

Schools must not take any disciplinary action (including exclusion) against a student because they are pregnant, have recently had a baby or are breastfeeding. Schools should not authorise more than eighteen weeks' absence (or "maternity leave") from school to ensure the student's reintegration into education as quickly as possible following the birth of a baby.

DISABILITY EQUALITY

The overriding objective of the Equality Act 2010 is to achieve equality (equal treatment) for all people whether they have a protected characteristic or not. However, the provisions relating to disability are different to those for all of the other protected characteristics, in that it **is** lawful, and in fact is sometimes a legal requirement, to treat a disabled individual or group of individuals **more favourably** than an individual or group of individuals without a disability.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as being where an individual or group of individuals has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect (lasting or recurring, or likely to last or recur, for at least twelve months) on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Some conditions such as being HIV positive, or having multiple sclerosis or cancer, are automatically deemed to have a disability regardless of their effect or longevity. Severe disfigurement will also come within the definition of disability (disfigurement by tattooing or piercing is excluded). Those that are certified as blind, severely sight impaired, sight impaired or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist are automatically deemed to have a disability.

Others conditions are not deemed to be a disability; such as addiction to alcohol (unless it is a symptom of a psychiatric illness lasting or recurring for at least twelve months), legal or illegal substances (unless medically prescribed as treatment), fire-setting, kleptomania, a tendency towards violence or sexual abuse of others. Hay fever sufferers are not deemed to have a disability; however hay fever may be taken into account where it aggravates the effect of another medical condition.

DIRECT DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be directly discriminated against or harassed because of their disability.

Schools must ensure that a student or group of students are not treated less favourably than another student or group of students, because of their disability, their parents' disability or the disability of somebody they associate with.

Schools cannot justify directly discriminating against a student or group of students with a disability by maintaining that their discriminatory act was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, as was the case under previously disability discrimination legislation.

It is **not** unlawful for a school to treat a disabled student or group of students **more** favourably than another student or group of students who are not disabled. This is positive disability discrimination and is lawful.

INDIRECT DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be indirectly discriminated against because of their disability, by the implementation of a provision, criterion or practice applied generally to those with or without the disability, unless there is a legitimate reason for the provision, criterion or practice and there is no other way to achieve it.

Schools must ensure that a student or group of students are not put at a disadvantage by the implementation of a school provision, criterion or practice which applies to all students because of their disability, unless they can show that it was implemented for a legitimate reason and was proportionate way of achieving the legitimate aim.

DISCRIMINATION ARISING FROM DISABILITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against because of **something arising in consequence of their disability**, unless there is a legitimate reason for discriminatory act and there is no other way to achieve it, and provided that the discriminator knew, or should have known, about the disability.

Schools must ensure that a student or group of students are not treated less favourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability, unless they can show that there was a legitimate reason for the less favourable treatment and there was no other way of achieving the legitimate aim.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISABILITY

The Equality Act 2010 requires “reasonable adjustments” to be made for individuals suffering from a disability.

Schools have the following duties:

- **Where a provision, criterion or practice places a disabled student or group of students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled, reasonable steps must be taken to avoid that disadvantage;**
- **Where a disabled student or group of students would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with students who are not disabled, the school must take reasonable steps to provide the auxiliary aid.**

An “auxiliary aid” includes equipment and services. The Equality Act 2010 does not provide a definition of “auxiliary aids”, however the dictionary definition includes helpful, supporting, assistant things or persons. Where a piece of equipment is necessary for all aspects of a student’s life rather

than being required in an educational context only (for example, hearing aids), it is likely that it would be considered unreasonable for a school to be expected to provide these.

Factors which a school may consider when considering whether the provision of an auxiliary aid to a disabled student is reasonable include the financial or other resources required, its effectiveness, its affect upon other students and health and safety requirements.

Where a student with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is already being provided with an auxiliary aid as part of their SEN provision, there is no need for the school to provide the auxiliary aid as part of their “reasonable adjustment” duty. Schools should not, however, assume that an auxiliary aid is not required under their “reasonable adjustment” duty for a student with SEN simply because it is not being provided under their SEN provision. In addition, where a school determines that it is unreasonable to provide an auxiliary aid (perhaps, for example, on the grounds of cost), it is not necessarily reasonable for the local authority to refuse to provide the auxiliary aid.

AGE EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) or harassed because of their age, unless it can be shown that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Age is widely defined as being either of a particular age or as being within an age group.

Schools must ensure that a parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of their age or age group, or the age or age group of somebody they associate with, unless they can show that there was a legitimate reason for treating them less favourably, and there was no other way to achieve it.

However age as a protected characteristic does not apply to pupils of the schools. Schools therefore remain free to admit and organise children in age groups and to treat pupils in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development without risk of legal challenge, even in the case of pupils over the age of 18.

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP EQUALITY

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an individual or group of individuals to be discriminated against (either directly or indirectly) or harassed because of they are married or in a civil partnership.

Schools must ensure that a parent, visitor or other person coming into contact with the school (whether individually or as a group) are not treated less favourably than others, including indirectly as a result of the implementation of a general practice or procedure, because of they or somebody they associate with are married or in a civil partnership.

Schools are **not** under a duty not to treat students less favourably because they are married or in a civil partnership.

SINGLE SEX SPORT

The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception allowing for single sex sports, games or other activities of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average female

student would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average male student. However, schools must still allow students of both sexes to have an equal opportunity to participate in the same sporting activities.

UNIFORM

The Equality Act 2010 does not deal specifically with school uniform or appearance but the general requirement not to discriminate would apply. It is for the governing body to decide matters relating to uniform and appearance.

The department of education guidance on school uniform policy advises that schools should be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and that schools are expected, where possible, to act reasonably in accommodating these needs, within a general uniform policy, without compromising important school policies, such as school safety or discipline.

While in accordance with the relevant Human Rights and Equality Legislation a student has the right to manifest their religion or belief by, for example, by wearing a specific item of jewellery or clothing, this must be permitted by the school where:

- The act is in fact a manifestation of the student's religion or belief (the act does not need to be a *requirement* of the religion or belief, but there must be a sufficiently close link between the act and the religion or belief¹);

and;

- If the act *is* in fact a manifestation of the student's religion or belief, there is no justification in the school interfering with the student's right to do so.

In deciding whether the school is justified in interfering with a student's right to manifest their religion, belief or culture, for example, by wearing a specific item of jewellery or clothing, the school should weigh up how important it is to the student to manifest their religion or belief in this way against the school's own considerations, for example the value in a school uniform policy being adhered to in encouraging pride in the school, enabling students to feel comfortable in the school environment, ensuring a sense of cohesion in the school, and protecting students from feeling pressure to dress in a certain way, in addition to security and health and safety considerations.

Corpus Christi's Uniform Policy provides details of the school uniform to be worn by students.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Some people may hold personal views in relation to the protected characteristic of sexual orientation because of their own religious beliefs. While it is not necessarily unlawful for a teacher or other employee of a school to express their own personal view, in an appropriate way and in an educational context that takes into account guidance on the delivery of Sex and Relationships Education and Religious Education, employees at a school must always remember that they are in a very influential position and their acts must still comply with their duty not to discriminate against individuals or groups of individuals because of their sexual orientation under the Equality Act 2010,

¹ Following the ruling by the European Court of Human Rights in the *Eweida* case, which may subsequently be overruled and will therefore be kept under review.

and not to manifest their religion or belief in contravention of the limitations prescribed under the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (see above).

BEHAVIOUR AND EXCLUSIONS

The process for excluding a student must be fair and equitable to students, however in relation to students with a behavioural disability, schools must keep in mind their duty to make “reasonable adjustments” for a student with a disability. A “reasonable adjustment” can be a decision to impose a less serious sanction for undesirable behaviour than the sanction which would have been imposed on a student who does not have a behavioural disability, including making a decision not to exclude for behaviour which would usually attract an exclusion.

Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour will be considered and include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities. The head teacher will also consider the use of a multi-agency assessment for a pupil who demonstrates persistent disruptive behaviour. Such assessments may pick up unidentified SEN but the scope of the assessment could go further, for example, by seeking to identify mental health or family problems.

Corpus Christi’s Behaviour Policy sets out the school’s expectations in relation to the way its students behave, including the sanctions which will be imposed if the Behaviour Policy is breached.

BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To tackle the above, extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities will be considered.

The school’s Behaviour Policy sets out the school’s expectations in relation to the way its students behave, including the sanctions which will be imposed if the Behaviour Policy is breached.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The department of education school attendance guidance states that where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education, schools should consider a part-time timetable being put into place as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

However the 'supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' guidance states that in some cases flexibility will be required, and external agencies engaged so as to ensure the pupil concerned is being provided with a type of suitable full time education.

If the authenticity of any illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.

Where a pupil has a medical condition, the school will put in place a healthcare plan to manage the pupil's medical conditions in school; this is separate to an education, health and care plan. Individual healthcare plans help schools effectively support pupils with medical conditions, by providing clarity about what needs to be done, by when and by whom.

Please refer to the school's "Administering Medication Policy".

THE SCHOOL AS AN EMPLOYER

The school also has responsibilities to comply with the Equality Act 2010 in its role as an employer, in relation to which separate HR policies apply. This policy applies to students, parents, visitors and other persons coming into contact with the school only.

PART 2 – THE SCHOOL’S EQUALITY DUTIES

THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

The General Duty

The Equality Act 2010 makes provision for a single “public sector equality duty” which extends to all protected characteristics. As a result of this provision, schools are required to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;**

and;

- **Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, by having regard to the need to:**
 - remove or minimise disadvantages connected to a relevant protected characteristic; and
 - take steps to meet the different needs of those sharing a relevant protected characteristic; and
 - encourage those who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in school life and activities in which participation is disproportionately low;

and;

- **Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, by having regard to the need to:**
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding;

The above duty is often referred to as the **General Duty**.

The reference to “relevant protected characteristics” includes the protected characteristics of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and age (except that the public sector equality duty does not apply to age where it relates to the provision of education to students in schools, or the provision of benefits, facilities or services to students in schools).

Having “due regard” means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the public sector equality duty.

DfE guidance on what this means in practice sets out the following:

- *Decision makers in schools must be aware of the public sector equality duty to have due regard to the three principles set out above when making decisions or taking action. Decision makers must*

assess whether their decision or action will have implications for a student or group of student with a protected characteristic;

- *Schools must have due regard to the three principles set out above when drafting and amending policies and procedures, and this should be at the forefront of their mind in advance, rather than an afterthought. Policies and procedures should be kept under review on a continuing basis;*
- *The public sector equality duty must be integrated into the day to day functioning of the school, and the analysis required to comply with the duty must be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind;*
- *Schools must not delegate their public sector equality duty to anyone else.*

The Specific Duty

Schools have a **Specific Duty** to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how the school is complying with its public sector equality duty, which must be updated at least annually, and re-published at least once every four years;
- Prepare and publish their **Equality Objectives**.

The **Specific Duty** exists to assist us to fulfil our obligations under the **General Duty**.

DfE guidance confirms that the publication of information to demonstrate how schools are complying with their public sector equality duty is not intended to be a “tick box” bureaucratic procedure, but rather a flexible, light touch exercise. Data about employees does not need to be published by schools which have fewer than 150 employees, although schools can choose to publish such information if they feel it would demonstrate their compliance. All data must be published in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 which means that, broadly speaking, individuals are not able to be identified in the published data. Schools are not required to publish any information which they do not already routinely collect, for example through RAISE online. The information published does not need to be statistical, it can be a reference to school policies or Governing Body meeting minutes, which are published online.

OFSTED REQUIREMENT

Not only do Academies need to comply with the Equality Duty outlined above but also with Ofsted, because treatment of the different diversity groups is covered throughout the inspectors evaluation schedule and particularly in the ‘Effectiveness of Leadership and Management’ section.

EQUALITY DATA

As an academy trust we are also required to publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty. This information should relate to people with protected characteristics who are: 1) employees; and 2) affected by our policies and practices (primarily pupils, but could include parents and the wider community).

ENFORCEMENT

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is responsible for assessing compliance with the specific duties, and for their enforcement

THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Schools are legally required to prepare a written **Accessibility Plan** to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and
- Improve the delivery to disabled students of information readily accessible to students who are not disabled, within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account the students' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

Schools must keep their Accessibility Plan under review throughout the period to which it relates and revise it if necessary. Schools must ensure that they implement their Accessibility Plan, and that they have adequate resources to implement it. A school inspector can ask to see the Accessibility Plan and may consider the preparation, publication, review, revision and implementation of it.

PART 3 – COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL DUTY

The school has in place the following policies and procedures in order to comply with its general duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Sex Equality

- All policies have an explicit aim of insuring inclusiveness based on gender.
- All classes and groups are carefully considered to ensure a balanced mix of boys and girls.
- Pupil progress meetings ensure gender groups get equal access to the curriculum, reasonable adjustments and interventions are put in place to ensure targeted support is given where the need is identified.
- Pupils are given equal access to all PE activities.
- Pupils given special or leadership responsibilities have equal representation.
- A father's group for parents is actively encouraged to promote participation in a mainly female parent group.
- We are fortunate, for a primary school, to have a nice balance of male/female staff at all levels ensuring positive role models of both genders.

Race Equality

- Our admissions policy takes into consideration groups attending Catholic chaplaincies from other countries and in other languages, this does not place them at a disadvantage when applying for a place at the school.
- Pupils given special or leadership responsibilities have equal representation.
- Pupil progress meetings ensure different ethnic groups get equal access to the curriculum, reasonable adjustments and interventions are put in place to ensure targeted support is given where the need is identified.
- Where possible we use the language skills of our staff to assist parents and visitors whose first language is not English.
- Our charges and remissions policy ensures access to all enrichment opportunities

Religion or Belief Equality

- We foster an environment of tolerance, care and service to others. We teach the Gospel values and live by them, in doing so we recognise the differences between us and celebrate these differences.
- We build strong links with other faith and non-faith communities and foster by covering other religious beliefs in our curriculum. We take opportunities to visit other places of worship, Mosques, temples and Synagogues, and learn about other belief systems.
- We have recently hosted the Lambeth Holocaust Memorial service at the request of the HM committee after our involvement over several years.

Sexual Orientation Equality

- We have an inclusive approach to all.
- We, as educators take a caring and holistic approach to this issue.

Gender Reassignment Equality

- We have an inclusive approach to all.
- We, as educators take a caring and holistic approach to this issue.

Pregnancy and Maternity Equality

- Due to the demographic of our families and age of our pupils, there is a constant and large number of mothers who will be pregnant at any one time. Allowances are made to accommodate and include them in meetings as much as possible. Timings of meetings are consulted on and where they are unable to make meeting time, separate meetings are made for them.

Disability Equality

- Children's different gifts and skills are known and celebrated by staff. Our holistic approach to children with SEN, means that they are included in as much day to day activity as possible. Where necessary the curriculum is tailored for their individual needs and these needs are known to all involved with them.
- Where disability is of a physical nature, adjustments are made to their environment and aids are procured, physical and professional, to help them with their learning and development.
- When necessary classes will be moved around to ensure the child with the disability is not disadvantaged and can be included in activities with their class.
- We have level access, accessible toilets and lift access to the main circulation areas of the school.
- Special arrangements are made for disabled parents when attending meetings and events. We also support them to gain access to local services.

Age Equality

- We actively encourage parents and family members of all ages to participate in school events and trips.
- Similarly we have links with a local elderly care home where we take part in social events and encourage the children to communicate with the residents to get a greater understanding of each other.
- Allowances are made for visitors with age related limitations and these are catered for at school performances or social events.

PART 4 – COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIFIC DUTY

The school publishes the following information in compliance with its specific duty to publish information to demonstrate how the school is complying with its public sector equality duty, and publish its equality objectives.

The school will update the information contained in this part at least annually and republish it at least once every four years.

Building on the core principles of our mission statement, we acknowledge the diversity of the community we serve and strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school reflects the diversity of all members of the school and the wider community.

The Corpus Christi community speaks over 30 languages, we recognise the richness that our diverse community brings to the school and we value the individuality of all our pupils, parents and staff. We are committed to giving our pupils and staff every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. Within this ethos of achievement, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. We aim to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society and ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people.

This policy helps to ensure that we promote the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. With the same principle applied to our staff, Parents, Governors and other stakeholders. To ensure this, the governing body have approved this policy, which recognises our legal duties listed below and how we will address them by applying seven core principles across each of the protected characteristics.

Protected Characteristics

Sex, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Disability.

Duties

- 1. THE DUTY TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, VICTIMISATION AND OTHER PROHIBITED CONDUCT**
- 2. THE DUTY TO ADVANCE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN THOSE WHO SHARE A PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC AND THOSE WHO DO NOT**
- 3. THE DUTY TO FOSTER GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THOSE WHO SHARE A PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC AND THOSE WHO DO NOT**

Core Principles

Principle 1: All Learners are of Equal Value

We see all pupils and staff as of equal value and we will foster an environment each child can achieve their full potential in terms of pupil progress and positions of responsibility:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religion, national origin or status;
- Whichever their gender;
- Whatever their level of attainment.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

We are clear that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. We ensure that the school gives equal access to the curriculum and positions of responsibility. Our policies and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take into account differences in backgrounds and the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made, for example, enabling transition;
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences are recognised;
- Gender, so that different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised;
- We provide support for individuals or groups with an aim to fostering an environment of inclusiveness.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging within our school and wider community

Our policies, procedures and activities will promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people;
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between all groups within our school community irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, age or disability;
- Mutual respect between boys and girls, men and women;
- In all of the above there will be an absence of discrimination, bullying or harassment on the grounds of disability, ethnicity, gender or any other protected characteristics.

Principle 4: Staff and volunteer recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees, potential employees and volunteers in the areas of recruitment and training (this includes volunteer staff, Parent Association members, volunteer readers etc.):

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religion or age;
- Whichever their gender.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We will take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- People with each of the protected characteristic and those without;
- Working with and consulting parents formally and informally on how we can reduce barriers, both physically and in relation to information.

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or an activity should be consulted with and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. We involve everyone:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religion or age;
- Whichever their gender.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- Those with a protected characteristic and those without.

THE SCHOOL'S EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

DfE guidance states that the school is free to choose its own equality objectives which best suit the school's students and wider school community. Like compliance with the duty to publish information, the publishing of equality objectives is not intended to be a "tick box" bureaucratic exercise. Equality objectives must be specific and measurable, and should be a tool for the school to use to improve the school experience for all students, particularly those with protected characteristics. Once an area of inequality has been identified, schools should formulate equality objectives to address them. Examples of equality objectives might be to reduce exclusion rates for Asian boys, to encourage girls to consider entering professions against the sex stereotype, to raise attainment in English for boys. After the first year, equality objectives should include progress made in meeting equality objectives previously set.

In order to further support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching, we have set the following objectives:-

Objective 1:

To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender, ethnicity and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils through intervention mapping, class support or extension and assessments as required.

Objective 2:

To ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to school life for example involvement in School Council, Green Team, School leadership Teams, assemblies, school production and fundraising.

Objective 3:

To publish and promote the school's Equality Plan through the school website, newsletter, staff policy folder in staff drive and staff meetings to ensure it is accessible to all.

Objective 4:

To raise levels of attainment in core subjects for vulnerable learners by using provision mapping and quantifying support and progress against this.

Objective 5:

To foster good relations with our community and other faith partners to ensure that pupils have a broad based knowledge and understanding of other faiths within the curriculum and through visits by community leaders and trips to places of worship.

Objective 6:

To ensure staff demonstrate a balance of gender roles in society and challenge stereotyping.

Objective 7:

To ensure the school provides equal opportunities in the curriculum through planning, assessment, analysis of data and enrichments opportunities such as within sports, music and science.

Objective 8:

To evaluate the needs of children and arrange staff training to meet those needs, assessing adjustments required to ensure that where possible the pupil's limitations are reduced as quickly as possible, for example by preparing a routine for using the lift; having pupil buddies or mentors in place to assist when appropriate, and having staff trained on using aids and medication where necessary.

PART 5 – ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The school has prepared and will implement the following accessibility plan to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and
- Improve the delivery to disabled students of information readily accessible to students who are not disabled, within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account the students' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

The school will keep the Accessibility Plan under continual review and revise it as necessary.

THE SCHOOL'S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Our school's accessibility plans are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them, as needed and annually- involving a range of stakeholders.

Vision and values

Corpus Christi holds Inclusion and Personalisation as paramount. We are wholly committed to ensuring that every child gets exactly what they need, and this includes equality of opportunity, access for all and inclusion at the heart of our community.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.

School strengths and areas for development

Awareness of Equalities legislation and issues:

Staff commitment and knowledge and expertise in terms of awareness of Equalities legislation is strong.

SLT: Mrs Connery, Mr. Coyle, Mrs Cole, Mrs Smart

MLT: Mr Kelleher, Mrs Graham, Mrs Powell, Mr Dervan

SENCO: Mrs Bray

SBM: M`s Ruiz

School Organisation:

School policies are written with Inclusion and personalisation at the heart of the documentation, ensuring all relevant legislation is upheld. Policies such as Administration of Medicines exist and will be reviewed and referenced in relation to individuals. Time is used effectively at Corpus Christi to ensure the needs of all learners are at the forefront of planning and timetabling.

Policies and practices:

Policies and procedures will be supportive tools to ensure the context and aims of the Access plan and Equalities documentation is a reality within Corpus Christi. Anti-Bullying policy and approaches, coupled with a clear aim to support children and adults to approach all aspects of life at school in an inclusive way.

Extra-curricular opportunity and enrichment visits will ensure access for all and the principle of each child getting exactly what they need will inform planning and procedures. Teaching and Learning approaches and the curriculum is organised to ensure children are the orchestrators, with adults playing a key role in facilitating learning, whilst promoting independence and individualism.

Physical Environment:

Corpus Christi is situated on two sites separated by a side road.

The Trent Road site consists of a one storey building with the Early Years and KS1 classrooms, associated toilets and main school hall. There is a two storey building consists of two classrooms and two small workrooms and a toilet. The other two storey building consists of school offices, toilets and staffroom facilities.

The Lambert Road site consists of three two storey buildings all connected to each other. The first building consists of two classrooms, toilets, hall, two small workrooms, a disabled toilet and corridor. The next building consists of four classrooms, ICT suite, Library and after school facility. The third part of the building consists of a further two classrooms and toilets. There is a disabled lift that gives access to hall, disabled toilet and a workroom.

The curriculum:

Curriculum organisation is conducive to inclusion and personalisation, differentiation and independence. The vision for learning at Corpus Christi ensures that the approaches applied in the Early Years Foundation Stage will be upheld and developed throughout the age-phases. The Corpus Christi vision of learning for life has 4 key aspects – flexible, progressive, connected and personalised. In addition, the inclusive approaches and the rights respecting ethos will enable all pupils to develop a sense of equality for all.

Information:

Access to information to ensure we are meeting the needs of all learners and their families will be a key priority at Corpus Christi. Initially, the use of simple signing through Makaton will support some children. In addition, the school employs a SALT, a Literacy Specialist Teacher, an ASC Specialist and buys in the Services of an Educational Psychologist. A Whole School Provision Map is reviewed and produced every half term to track need across the School. Parents of children with Special needs have formal meetings with the SENCO and class teachers twice a year in addition to usual meetings with class teachers. Ensuring we audit the needs of our learners and enable access to information for all will be regularly reviewed by the academy.

Outcomes:

- Minimised impact on disabled pupils of the way the school is organised, for example, school policies and practices around the administration of medicines, time-tabling, anti bullying policy, school trips and teaching and learning;
- Improved physical environment of the school;

- Global access to the curriculum;
- The ways in which information is currently provided for disabled pupils; and
- Outcomes for disabled pupils including exams and end of key stage results and achievements in extra- curricular activities.

Involving disabled people:

This plan will be informed by:

- The views and aspirations of disabled pupils themselves;
- The views and aspirations of the families of disabled pupils;
- The views and aspirations of other disabled people or voluntary organisations; and
- The priorities of the community.

Information about how the range of stakeholders have influenced the plan, and evidence relating to impact will be gathered and reported as part of the documentation.

Making it happen:

The whole school takes a collective approach to ensuring the needs of all pupils and families are met effectively at Corpus Christi. However, the Senior Leadership Team working in partnership with the SENCO, will play a key role in the monitoring and impact evaluation.

This Access Plan will be reviewed annually and renewed every three years.

We will seek to:

- Manage and improve the physical environment of the school buildings and grounds to meet the needs of a range of disabled students currently on roll and prospective students.
- To establish a culture of mutual trust and respect between all members of the St George's.
- To build a community that celebrates achievement at all levels.

Making it available:

This Access plans will be available and accessible to interested parties through publication on the Corpus Christi website. Copies in alternative format, including hard copies, other languages and braille, will be provided, where possible, on request.

Over the next academic year we seek to:

- increase accessibility to 1st floor areas for both adults and children.
- promote our Young Interpreters programme so that parents can access information about their child's progress and the curriculum.
- develop access to the curriculum for children with medical, physical, emotional and learning needs through intervention programmes and additional equipment.
- Ensure all children can participate in enrichment activities and residential school jour