

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

March 2023 – March 2024

Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus

OUR TRUST PRAYER

We thank you, God of Love, for the gift of children.

Bless the work of our Trust, that in all we do
young people may grow in wisdom and stature,

and so come
to know you,
to love you
and to serve you
as Jesus did.

We make this prayer in his name who is God
with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen

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The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (our Trust) welcomes young people of all faiths and none and is committed to providing each of them with a high-quality education and environment where Christian values and principles permeate all that we do.

Our Trust will support and develop the character of Church of England and other schools as they strive for continuous improvement and educational excellence for all pupils. Our Trust aims to foster social justice and enhance social mobility by delivering a high-quality education which will ensure the best possible outcomes for all its pupils.

In line with the Church of England's "Vision for Education – Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good"- our Trust's vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education: Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity.

The Vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole human community and its environment, whether national, regional, or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the forming of new settlements to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Who this policy applies to:

All employees, pupils/students, Board of Directors and Local Governing Body members of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust ('our Trust')

Date of last review by Trust Board: September 2021

Introduction

This policy outlines the vision for equality, diversity, and inclusion within Parish as a member of the LDST. The policy covers the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998. This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

LDST Policy

Our Trust values and respects difference and meets its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

In meeting these duties, we will have regard for the equal treatment of people based on the Equality Act's nine protected characteristics and will also have due regard to the way in which policies and strategic decisions can reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

Age
Disability
Gender Reassignment
Pregnancy and Maternity
Marriage and Civil Partnership
Race/Ethnicity
Religion and belief
Sex
Sexual Orientation

Additionally, our Trust and schools gather information on other groups including (but not limited to):

Pupil Premium status
Carer status
English as an additional language
Special educational needs
Looked after children
Offending past

We aim to create a culture of acceptance, respect and inclusion. We do not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination in or out of the workplace. By valuing diversity and being inclusive, our vision is to enable the communities in which we serve to flourish and achieve. Founded on Christian values, we help our schools to meet their purpose of providing an

outstanding education for all learners.

Our Trust commits to:

- creating a community where diverse cultures are celebrated, where everybody feels welcome and can use their differences to develop themselves and the environment, they work in;
- a culture that is based on our Trust's values and consideration of how behaviour affects others inside and outside our Trust;
- regularly reflecting on our own practice to ensure that what we do doesn't create barriers to participation for pupils/students, employees, or Local Governors/Trust Board members;
- providing outstanding opportunities and education to all its communities;
- supporting and promoting all the communities it serves.

We recognise the importance that Equality and Human Rights legislation must play in promoting equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination and seek to exceed our legal obligations and to provide an inclusive environment for all where employees, pupils/students and local communities can develop and reach full potential.

Our Trust will:

- set equality objectives (reviewed annually), and publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- seek to ensure that our Trust-wide recruitment strategy attracts a representative sample of our communities and we aim to have a balanced gender composition. In the case where this balance does not represent the population, we will formally review our recruitment efforts to ensure they are inclusive and make improvements where appropriate;
- report to the Board and management team, on how our Trust is doing on its representation priorities;
- review all policies and practices on a rolling basis to ensure that they meet legal obligations, and work to exceed these;
- create a culture that drives positive behaviour;
- have clear complaints procedures and report on complaints annually;
- bi-annually review recruitment processes to ensure that our practice supports our vision;
- ensure our procurement criteria are inclusive and support our Trust's Christian values;
- work in partnership with organisations that support our Trust's values and vision.

Our schools will:

- be at the heart of the community, underpinning our Trust's values to create a welcoming environment for all, celebrating the diversity of the communities they serve and promoting community cohesion;
- ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion run through everything they do and are included in all policies when reviewed;
- provide a safe environment where adults are dedicated to protecting the rights, meeting the needs, and supporting the aspirations of children. Each school will be recognised by all as an inclusive, high-quality learning environment;
- publish their own school specific equalities statement, information and objectives which will be consistent with our Trust's umbrella policy, and which will be reviewed and updated annually;
- bi-annually review admissions processes to ensure that our practice supports our vision for equality, diversity and inclusion;
- ensure procurement criteria are inclusive and support the values of our Trust and the school;
- have clear complaints procedures and report on complaints annually;
- ensure their Governing Body is open and inclusive by:
 - asking for annual reviews of meeting times;
 - aiming to ensure that the Governing Body recruitment attracts a representative sample of the local community and has a balanced gender composition;
 - communicating in an open and inclusive manner;
 - advertising community/staff/parent/carer governing body opportunities to all communities in which the school serves.
- report annually on the equality objectives set, the equality & diversity profile of their staff

(this will be used to create a Trust-wide profile) and student/pupil population, complaints received, and the activities taken to ensure their Local Governing Body is open and inclusive.

LIVERPOOL DIOCESAN SCHOOLS TRUST EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: To embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum and teaching & learning practices, so that all pupils can overcome barriers and achieve the highest standards of education

LDST and its schools will work towards a curriculum and teaching & learning practices which:

- are inclusive - all pupils can access the curriculum and achieve their potential
- show respect for and appreciation of one another as individuals
- prepare pupils for life in a diverse society by encouraging respect for linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity that exists in local communities and the wider world
- use specialist programmes and dedicated resources to support pupils who need it the most
- widen educational and personal horizons of all pupils if limited by factors that compromise equality
- monitor and analyse pupil achievement and progress by ethnicity, gender and disability, and act on any trends or patterns in this data which identify the need for additional support for pupils
- are proactive in tackling discrimination
- promote benefits of diversity

Objective 2: to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion across the whole Trust

LDST and its schools will work towards this objective by:

- improving the recruitment, retention, progression, development, and experience of the people employed by LDST, to enable the Trust to become an inclusive employer of choice.
- ensuring, as we adopt a Trust-wide HR information system, that this incorporates the ability to provide robust reporting on and monitoring of equalities data.
- further developing reporting on our gender pay gap and – in future – other pay gaps (e.g., ethnicity), and taking positive action to reduce these gaps where possible.
- taking steps to address the risk of bias and discriminatory behaviour, initially by raising awareness of this facet of equality and diversity through leadership training; and ensuring that 'blind recruitment' takes place for all roles across our Trust.
- creating and promoting opportunities for staff voice, and debate & dialogue, within our Trust around these key issues.

Inclusion at Parish

At Parish we consciously live out our mission statement of 'Learning and Growing Together in Faith, Hope and Love'.

We foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments where we actively strive to provide educational excellence for all of our pupils by celebrating our differences. We believe that this provides the best possible outcomes for all children by drawing their attention to the many differences present in our school community. In doing so, we are overcoming barriers in order to create an inclusive space whereby children can learn tolerance, acceptance and cooperation. By building on our similarities and understanding that our differences help us learn and grow, our children learn to be tolerant and respectful of each other and of the communities to which they belong.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will
 - Ensure the information and objectives set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout our school, including to staff, pupils and parents.
 - Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year (pupil population).
 - Ensure that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every four years.
 - Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Inclusion Team.
 - Ensure that they are familiar with all the relevant legislation and the contents of this document.
 - Attend appropriate equality and diversity training.
- Our Headteacher will
 - Ensure our staff and pupils have an awareness and understanding of the equality objectives.
 - Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report to Governors
 - Identify any staff training needs and deliver training as necessary.
- Our staff will
 - Take part in any appropriate training opportunities to develop and further their knowledge around equality and diversity.
 - Work to achieve the objectives set out in this policy.

Eliminating discrimination and Advancing Equality

At Parish, staff and Governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, during meetings and training. All staff who are new to the school receive training

on the Equality Act as part of their induction, ensuring that they understand the importance of avoiding discrimination and prohibited conduct. As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, our school aims to advance equality of opportunity by;

- Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (eg pupils with disabilities or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (eg enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activity (eg encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school activities). In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, our school will
- Publish attainment data each academic year, showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (eg declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying).
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils.

Fostering good relations

At Parish, we aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Through our Parish Spirit curriculum, our children learn the importance of acceptance and friendship as well as understanding a range of religions and cultures. Our texts across the curriculum are carefully selected to ensure the representation of a wide range of cultures. We live out our mission statement of Learning and Growing Together in Faith, Hope and Love by working with our local community and the wider Liverpool city area to invite leaders of local faith groups and organisations to speak in assemblies and work closely with groups of children, carrying out age-appropriate, immersive experiences.

Equality considerations

At Parish, we are a predominantly Christian cohort. However, we recognize that our school community is built up of a range of religions which are equally celebrated. Therefore, we understand the importance of observing religious holidays and festivals with families. If it is the case that a festival falls on what would normally be a day in the academic calendar, we strive to authorize these absences.

Our school community

In addition to pupils with protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act), Parish gathers further information on the following groups of pupils.

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND)
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Young Carers
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- Children with parents in the armed forces
- Offending past

As it may be possible to identify children from the information provided, when the numbers of pupils with a particular characteristic is low, and the information is special category information, the information will be excluded from publication but will be taken fully into consideration when developing and determining our policies, procedures and equality objectives.

Number of pupils on roll; 200

Age range of pupils; 4 – 11 years

Gender; 113 boys (56.5%) 87 girls (43.5%)

As our school has fewer than 150 members of staff, we are not required to publish data about our staff. However, employee related statistics for the LDST will be published centrally, to demonstrate that we are complying with the general duty. When doing this, the LDST will be aware of the data protection rules, ensuring individuals are not identified through the publication of data.

Objectives

Our objectives are formed in our Inclusion Action Plan, and are in line with whole school priorities in our School Development Plan.

Equality Objective 1:

Linked to Pupil Attainment/Gender

OBJECTIVE: To explore and understand the barriers to success in literacy boys face across KS2

Why we have chosen this objective: Our internal data, which is discussed termly at Pupil Progress Meetings, indicates that there are gaps in attainment in several KS2 classes between boys' and girls' reading and writing results.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Explore best practice at other LDST schools, locally nationally who may have encountered similar issues. Review current practices and initiatives. Conduct action research projects centred around boys' engagement with reading and writing.

Outcome: Use the information gathered to develop new approaches, strategies and initiatives aimed at developing literacy skills with a particular focus on boys' development.

Progress we are making towards this objective: A new English scheme initiative is being trialled in Year 5. Read Write Inc Fresh Start reading comprehension intervention groups have been set up for children in Year 5 and 6. The LDST English Network is regularly attended so as to share and learn from successful practice. School is participating in an oracy project which supports literacy development.

Equality Objective 2

Linked to Pupil Attendance/Disadvantage

OBJECTIVE: To explore and understand the reasons for the disproportionately higher level of persistent absenteeism for those in receipt of PPG compared to those not in receipt of this additional funding.

Why we have chosen this objective: Our school's attendance figures 2021/22, showed that 17.1 % of the school community has attendance below

90%. This is classed as 'persistent absenteeism'. Out of this 17.1%, 47.8% are children who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant and are therefore considered to be disadvantaged.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Identify best practice from other LDST schools and local schools with similar issues. Our Attendance and Pastoral Support Officer, alongside the SLT, will work closely with families of those both at persistent absentee level and at risk of becoming a persistent absentee in the future. We will embed a clear reward system for attendance at all levels.

Outcome: To reduce the number of persistent absenteeism across all pupils but with particular focus on those who are disadvantaged. This will ensure, especially after school closures due to Covid-19, that all children make the necessary progress and that the importance of regular school attendance is reaffirmed with families.

Progress we are making towards this objective: Meetings with those 'at risk' of falling below 90% are routinely occurring to offer support wherever possible. Attendance Competitions are being actively promoted. Case Studies to explore wider attendance issues are taking place with further support being offered where necessary.

Equality Objective 3:

Linked to promotion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

OBJECTIVE: To develop robust and secure procedures for identifying and supporting EAL students and to ensure they have equal access to the curriculum, school facilities, extra-curricular activities and effective support systems.

Why we have chosen this objective: The number of children identified as EAL on role is steadily increasing and there are currently more than fifteen different first languages spoken within the immediate school community.

To achieve this objective we plan to: create accessible reading materials using dual coding symbols, to effectively convey key information to parents

and carers of EAL children new to the school, so that all pupils and their families have equal access to support provided by school and associated agencies. Invest in a recommended EAL intervention programme for pupils to develop their understanding of English alongside their first language. Purchase class focus texts in children's first languages to encourage the development of fluency and comprehension skills.

Outcome: Children and families will feel welcomed, represented and included within the school community. All pupils will have equal opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities. Children will make measurable progress from their starting points, as a direct result of their developing understanding of the English language.

Progress we are making towards this objective: EAL children are assessed and included in the RWI synthetic phonics scheme delivered by trained staff. They have access to phonetically decodable English reading books when they are able to blend and segment sounds to read CVC and CVCC words. The online learning platform The Learning Village has been trialed and as a result ten site licenses have been purchased and the programme is being used by children Y2-Y6.

Equality Objective 4:

Linked to promotion of Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

OBJECTIVE:

To reduce levels of homophobic language used amongst pupils, and to promote respect and understanding of LGBTQ+ people and issues in an age appropriate manner.

Why we have chosen this objective: There has been some misunderstanding and misuse of the term 'gay' amongst the UKS2 pupils. They have assumed negative connotations with the term and have used it as a derogatory term amongst their peers.

To achieve this objective we plan to: instill British and Christian values by educating pupils on LGBTQ+ diversity through carefully tailored age-appropriate lessons outlined in the PSHE 'Parish Spirit' curriculum. Promote

inclusion through representation in terms of class displays and subject specific reading spine books as well as undertaking the Rainbow Flag Award.

Outcome: All members of the school community will be represented within the school building and within lesson content outside of the Parish Spirit curriculum. Children will be educated to understand the definition of key terms when making reference to the LGBTQ+ community. Through direct teaching and discussion opportunities regarding key terminology, children will be more informed about what it means to be gay, removing any stigma previously attached to the term.

Progress we are making towards this objective: 'No Outsiders' Purchase of books which address LGBTQ+ themes in an age appropriate manner. LGBTQ+ Month celebrated in school through a variety of class activities to promote inclusion and to clarify any misconceptions.