Single Equality Duty

Responsible for policy:
Chair of Directors

CC2: Strategy, People and Organisational Development

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Definitions

In this Single Equality Duty, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

i '**The Romero Catholic Academy**' means the Company named at the beginning of this **Single Equality Duty** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi**, **Good Shepherd**, **Sacred Heart**, **Blue Sky**, **SS Peter and Paul**, **St Gregory**, **St John Fisher**, **St Patrick**, **Cardinal Wiseman**, **Shared Services Team**.

ii '**Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.

iii '**Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.

iv '**Chair'** means the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.

v '**Clerk'** means the Clerk to the Board or the Clerk to the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.

vi '**Chief Executive Officer or CEO'** means the person responsible for performance of all Academies and Staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.

i '**Diocesan Schools Commission**' means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.

ii '**Local Academy Committee**' means the governing body of the School.

iii '**Academy Committee Representatives'** means the governors appointed and elected to the Local Academy Committee of the School, from time to time.

iv '**Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school.

v '**School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.

vi '**Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)

vii '**Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body elected from time to time.

viii **'Catholic Education Service'** means the national advisory body for Catholic schools (also known as CES)

1. Introduction

1. Introduction The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act and came into force on 1 October 2010. A key measure in the Act is the public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011.

The Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. The aims of the Equality Duty are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

(Taken from The Public Sector Equality Duty)

In The Romero Catholic Academy, we believe all members of our community should contribute to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion. We will aim to do this by focusing on:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics due to having that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics that are different from people who do not have that characteristic (including taking account of a disability).
- Encourage protected groups to participate in public life and in any other activity where participation is disproportionately low.

(*Taken from The Public Sector Equality Duty)*

The Protected Characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Pregnancy and maternity
4. Religion or belief (including 'lack of')
5. Race - this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Sex
7. Sexual orientation
8. Gender reassignment
9. Marriage and civil partnerships (but just for the first aim of the duty)

It is also unlawful to discriminate on the basis of association or perception i.e. because a person with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated has a protected characteristic, or if you think a person has a protected characteristic even if this is mistaken.

Although age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment and to the provision of goods and services (except for children) this does not apply to pupils in schools. This allows schools to differentiate on the basis of age so that schools can continue to organise children in age groups and treat them age appropriately etc. This applies even where the pupil is over the age of 18. *(Taken from CES Equality Act 2010 Guidance for schools)*

2. Legal Requirements

Under the duty, all public sector bodies are required to:

1. **Publish equality information:** Public authorities to publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty.
   This information shall include information relating to people with protected characteristics who are:
   - Employees
   - Affected by its policies and practices

   All information should be published in an accessible manner. It can be published individually or as part of another document.

2. **Prepare and publish equality objectives:** Public authorities to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives it thinks it should achieve to meet the general equality duty. To be done at least every four years and leaders must ensure the objectives are specific and measurable.

This policy recognises the four types of unlawful behaviour (see Appendix 1)

1. Direct discrimination
2. Indirect discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation

3. Eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity

Strategies used in school to help eliminate discrimination and promote equality:

- Planning activities of a non-stereotypical nature
- Giving pupils time to talk in class discussions to give everyone opportunity to voice opinion and discuss how they are feeling
- Encouraging the sharing of experiences
- Reviewing and updating resources so that appropriate messages are presented to the pupils
- Planning role play experiences to include addressing age, disability, race and gender
- Providing a differentiated curriculum by using classroom approaches that cater for individual differences, but which do not make distinctions that have negative effects on pupils, their learning and development
- Displays around the school promoting positive equality issues
- Providing an “entitlement” curriculum which aims to offer the same balanced curriculum and learning experiences to all
- Pupils encouraged to think about the exclusion of others and the negative effect it can have
- Involving pupils in promise making in the classroom and at a whole school level through the school council
- Using assembly time and collective worship themes to reinforce equal opportunity issues
- Using targets and rewards for pupils to reinforce good behaviour and attitudes
- Subject leaders to address equality issues within their subject
- Giving pupils a voice e.g. through the school council
- Sharing various religious celebrations throughout the year
- Holding opportunities to focus on Culture, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the year

4. In relation to the Ofsted framework, the Romero Catholic Academy recognises that

- Through the quality of education judgement criteria are clear that the entitlement to a high-quality education applies equally to all learners
- The personal development judgement makes clear the importance of a provider's curriculum extending beyond the academic to include its work in preparing learners for life in modern Britain. It specifically highlights the important role that education providers play in equipping learners to be respectful citizens, developing their understanding of and appreciation for diversity, celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law
- The leadership and management judgement criteria include the extent to which leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing that high- quality, inclusive education for all
- The leadership and management criteria also include the extent to which those with responsibility for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its legal duties. This includes those under the Equality Act 2010 and, where applicable, the PSED
- The Romero Catholic Academy believes that all learners should receive a high-quality education, including pupils with **Special education needs** and/ or **disability**. Where appropriate the curriculum for learners with SEND should be amended to meet their age, aptitude and ability. As a group of schools, we are committed that the curriculum should be designed for learners with SEND so that it is ambitious and meets their aspirations. In schools, in accordance with Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010, we must make reasonable adjustments for learners with SEND. This may include amending the curriculum and adjusting the provision of information to individual learners. It may also include reasonable adjustments in applying behaviour policies.
- As a group of **faith** schools, we are committed that pupils study a broad curriculum. Within the curriculum we offer, notably in provision for personal development, we set clear expectations about preparing learners for life in modern Britain and their understanding of fundamental British values. We acknowledge that as Catholic schools educating pupils on their faith, we are equally clear that this must be done alongside ensuring that learners are educated about the protections and rights that are afforded to all those with protected characteristics under British law.
- A considerable body of evidence [3] shows variation in the educational performance of different **ethnic** groups. That performance also varies between stages and phases of education. For example, some groups perform well at primary school but less so at secondary school. We are also mindful of evidence that shows certain groups of learners, including some racial groups, are disproportionately represented among those excluded from school. Through our monitoring of school standards (performance; attendance; exclusions etc) and soft data, we will consider whether all learners are benefiting from the curriculum, or whether some are missing out. We will need to consider where leaders are possibly not reaching their potential, whether those learners have things in common – in some cases, this may be race. This will help us to see every learner as a 'whole person', including being aware of their protected characteristics.
- **The Academy Committee** will receive a Principal report, Attendance and Behaviour report through the year to capture the evidence on any trends, trails of underperformance which will be used to raise questions.

5. Developing good relations

The Romero Catholic Academy strives to deliver a high-quality curriculum which results in a positive impact on all learners, thereby encouraging good relations between all learners in the following ways.

The behaviour and attitudes judgement criteria include:

- the extent to which relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture
- whether leaders, teachers and learners create an environment where bullying, peer-on-peer abuse or discrimination are not tolerated
- the speed and effectiveness of the response to bullying, peer-on-peer abuse and discrimination if they do occur.

The personal development judgement criteria include the extent to which the provision is:

- developing learners' understanding and appreciation of diversity
- celebrating what we all have in common
- promoting respect for all the different protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

We believe that tackling these areas specifically through a high-quality curriculum will ensure that all learners have a positive educational experience.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

The Romero Catholic Academy is committed to comply with our legal duties to advance equality, diversity and inclusion.
Engaging with stakeholders and members of the public to raise any concerns, through the relevant policy, we can focus on improving our positive approach to equality, diversity or inclusion.

Success Criteria
Equal opportunity and the effectiveness of inclusive practices that promote and value diversity and difference will be monitored and evaluated by the Directors. This will include the following (not an exhaustive list):

- Examination results
- Playground/classroom interactions
- Displays in schools
- Learning environment reviews
- Perceptions of parents/carers and pupils e.g. through questionnaires, pupil voice, school councils
- Teaching styles and differentiated work/activities – through scrutiny of planning and work
- Use of resources
- Teacher assessment and value-added information
- Classroom observations of the quality of teaching and learning
- Participation in extra-curricular activities
- Attendance and exclusion data reports
- Reports of any incidents of discrimination
- Monitoring of playground behaviour and CPOM information analysis

7. Data relating to our adherence to equality duty

The following is a list of the data that we will publish as and when appropriate in line with the Equality Duty:

- National Performance Data – relative performance of different groups of students in school
- Summary of behaviour data (including exclusions) broken down by characteristics
- Report showing the 'makeup' of current staff by characteristic (gender, race, etc) where we have the information.
- Report of specific complaints/incidents of bullying specifically related to age, race, religion, gender or sexuality.
- Reference to any sections of the school Self Evaluation Form which provide evidence of the way in which we have promoted equality &/or important actions agreed which relate to promoting equality during the year

This information, where appropriate, will be published as part of the Principal's report. In addition, a brief commentary on the above data, summarising evidence of performance in relation to the above headings will be published with this document on the school's website. This summary will not contain specific data as this could enable identification of individuals. Instead, it will be a commentary of the review by governance.

8. Links to other policies

The following school policies and procedures are relevant to the school's approach to ensuring the aims of the equality duty are met:

Academy Policies **See individual website**

- Admissions Policy
- Single Equality Duty Plan
- Accessibility Plan

MAC Policies **Click here**

- Charging Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Leave Policy
- Safeguarding Recruitment Policy
- Secondment Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

When these policies are reviewed, consideration will be given to the aims of the equality duty and more generally to the school's commitment to value all people equally. In order to ensure that this is done, a copy of points one and two from this document will be included with any of the above policies when they are due for review by Directors and Academy Representatives as a reminder of the need to consider the impact of these policies in promoting equality.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Directors delegate the implementation of this policy to the Academy Committee.
This policy will be reviewed by CC2 Strategy, People and Organisational Development.

Appendix 1

The Equalities Act 2010 defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Unlawful behaviour

1. **Direct discrimination** – occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic, than they treat, or would treat, other people;
2. **Indirect discrimination** – occurs where a "provision, criteria or practice" is applied which has the effect of putting people who have a protected characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic;
3. **Harassment** – "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. In schools this applies only to harassment because of sex, race, disability and pregnancy and maternity. It does not apply to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This does not of course mean that such behaviour would be permissible; it would remain unlawful discrimination notwithstanding that this legal definition does not apply;
4. **Victimisation** – is where a person is treated less favourably because of something done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act e.g. because the person has brought a claim under the Act.

(Taken from CES Equality Act 2010 Guidance for Catholic Schools)

Appendix 2 Exceptions

Exceptions for Schools with a Religious Character

1. **Admissions**
    a. Priority may be given on the basis of faith criteria in cases of where schools are oversubscribed in accordance with admissions law and the provisions of the School Admissions Code. Schools designated as having a religious character must have regard to any guidance from the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when constructing faith-based oversubscription criteria and must also consult that body or person when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. Catholic schools must therefore have regard to diocesan guidance and consult with their diocese. This applies to all Catholic schools, including schools which are under the trusteeship of a religious order.
2. **Benefits, facilities and services**
    a. Exceptions are provided for schools with a religious character in relation to how education is provided and access to aspects of school life. Catholic schools will still be able to mark or celebrate events specific to their religion and ethos.
    b. Parents, guardians or carers will not be able to claim that their children have been discriminated against simply because an equivalent celebration of events of significance to their particular religion is not arranged. Schools will also still be able to organise trips to a local church and will not have to organise visits to accommodate children of other faiths within the school. The DfE guidance also states as an example that a child of a different faith could not claim that they were being treated less favourably because objects symbolic of a school's faith, such as the Bible, were given a special status on the school.
3. **Employment**
    a. The Act provides that for schools with a religious character it will not be unlawful discrimination to do certain things permitted by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ("the SSFA"). This means that for Catholic schools, in common with other voluntary aided schools, preference may be given in connection with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of teachers, to those whose religious beliefs or religious practice is in accordance with the tenets of the school's religion or religious denomination or who give or are willing to give religious education in accordance with the tenets of the faith. Conduct that is incompatible with the precepts of the Church, or which fails to uphold its tenets, may be taken into consideration in determining whether the teacher's employment should be terminated.
    b. Independent schools with a religious character may also consider religious considerations. Academies, although publicly funded, are independent schools. The Act contains equivalent provisions for Catholic independent schools as apply to 1 DfE School Admissions Code 1st February 2012 paragraph 1.38 2 Section 60(5) School Standards and Framework Act 1998 7

Example of the Individual Equality Action Plan

Published on the website 2026-2027

Equality Strand	Focus	Planned actions	Timescale	Person responsible	Monitoring	Success criteria
Race & Ethnicity	Promote cultural awareness and representation	Review curriculum for diverse perspectives Celebrate cultural events (for example, Black History Month) Staff CPD on unconscious bias	Ongoing	Assistant Head (Curriculum) Heads of Faculty Heads of Department	SLT Deep Dive curriculum reviews Faculty Quality Assurance Pupil voice	Increased pupil engagement Positive feedback from pupils and parents
Disability	Improve accessibility and inclusion for all	Audit physical accessibility - Ensure SEND provision is inclusive Staff training on neurodiversity Ensure that risk assessments are in place	Reviewed half termly	SENDCo Operations Manager	SEND reviews and department quality assurance Parent/carer feedback Pupil voice Internal and external site audits	Improved outcomes for SEND students Positive EHCP reviews Positive feedback from pupils and parents Compliant internal and external audits
Gender	Promote gender equality in all areas	Review subject uptake by gender - Challenge gender stereotypes in teaching - Promote inclusive leadership opportunities -Improve attainment outcomes of male pupils as part of school improvement	Ongoing	Vice Principal – Pastoral Assistant Headteacher – Raising Attainment and Assessment	Data analysis Pupil voice	Balanced subject choices Increased confidence in all genders

				PSHE lead Subject Leaders		Attainment gap closing especially at Key Stage 4
Religion & Belief	Respect, nurture and celebrate the Catholic Faith whilst also being an inclusive and welcoming community rooted in Gospel Values.	Celebration of the Word -Retreat events for pupils and staff RE curriculum includes world religions using diocese directives - Staff training on teaching in a Catholic School	Ongoing	Principal Assistant Headteacher – PICCL Head of RE Lay Chaplain	lesson observations Assembly evaluations Catholic School Inspection	Inclusive ethos Language of faith shapes dialogue amongst the community Policies and practices reflect a distinctive Catholic approach
Sexual Orientation	Create a safe and inclusive environment for all in accordance with the Catholic Church 's belief that all people are made in the image of God and deserve dignity. Identify, respond and report racist, religious, homophobic, sexist, misogynistic or any other unjust discrimination	Update anti-bullying policy Promote tolerance and understanding through student groups via PHSE and RHSE curriculum	Ongoing	Vice Principal - Pastoral DSL All Pastoral Lead All staff	Behavior logs Pupil surveys Parental surveys	Reduction in bullying incidents Positive student wellbeing indicators Reduction in reportable incidents of this nature
Socioeconomic Status	Support pupil premium / FSM/ FSM6	Monitor Pupil Premium/FSM/FSM6 strategy Provide access to trip and	Ongoing	DSL	Disadvantage data	Narrowed attainment gap

		enrichment activities Uniform and tech support schemes Build cultural capital opportunities		Assistant Headteacher - Pupil Premium Lead Assistant Headteacher – Raising Attainment Assistant Headteacher – Post 16 Strategic Lead for Attendance	Attendance trends Attainment trends	Improved participation in events/clubs Improved attendance data