



## Benedict Biscop CE Academy Single Equality Scheme

### School's Diversity Vision

In recent years our society has struggled to come to terms with rapid social, cultural and demographic change. This struggle has driven us to seek effective ways to promote equality and social inclusion, especially in the workplace and more generally in society. We have seen the introduction of new laws against unjust discrimination. Anglican organisations and institutions have sought to respond creatively and positively to these initiatives, recognising that they are inspired by the profound moral value of respect for the human dignity of each person.

The purpose of our policy on Diversity and Equality and the Single Equality Scheme is to raise awareness, to explain some of the requirements of the law, and to encourage the whole school community to respond to this new situation in a way that reflects our particular values and traditions.

The fundamental truths of Christianity, in common with other faiths, include the dignity and equality of all human beings. All of us are created in the image of God, are loved by God and are part of one human family. Thus every human being deserves respect and has fundamental rights.

**The quality of relationships between all members of school, staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of a church school. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. Jesus was clear in His instructions to the disciples on this matter. "Love your neighbour as yourself" – Matthew 22:39. "This is my commandment: love each other." John 15:17. Everyone associated with the school is made in the image of God and is to be loved. This is the commandment from which Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy derives its policy for cultural diversity.**

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships which include governors, staff, children parents, church members and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which include all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that Christian love will pervade all aspects of life at Benedict Biscop CE Academy. It will influence how we reward and chastise. It will affect how we value work and achievement of pupils

and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environment is created and cared for, in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team.

We live in a world which is complicated, diverse and unequal. Respecting diversity and promoting equality is complex and challenging forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.

### **Benedict Biscop CE Academy combined Single Equality Scheme.**

This outlines our commitment to integrate equality and diversity into all that we do, and incorporates the statutory duties that we must meet as an Academy, an employer and a service provider.

The Scheme details our vision to create an environment where all people who are part of our school community feel comfortable and safe, and where the needs of that community are well understood and provided for.

We believe that this Scheme will help us to meet our legislative responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity, and we will strive to make improvements where these are identified; these are set out in our three year action plan at the end of the document.

We see this Scheme as one that belongs to the whole school community, which is why we have consulted with a wide range of people, including staff, pupils, parents, governors and community groups.

We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being fully inclusive and accessible and ultimately in providing a quality learning experience for all our children and young people.

### **THE EQUALITY ACT 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates existing law into a single legal framework. It updates, simplifies and strengthens the previous legislation and provides a modern, accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

### **The Equality Duty**

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a new general public sector equality duty (PSED) came into force in April 2011. This duty states that public bodies (which include schools), must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The equality duty replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

## **Who is protected under the Act**

Benedict Biscop CE Academy has obligations under the Act as:

- an employer
- a body who carries out public functions, and
- a service provider.

Therefore, Benedict Biscop CE Academy will make provision for the following groups of people:

- Employees
- Prospective pupils (in relation to admissions arrangements as governors are the admitting authority)
- Pupils at the Academy (including those absent or temporarily excluded)
- Former pupils (if there is a continuing relationship based on them having been a pupil at the school)
- Families and groups who might use the school for community use.

## **Protected characteristics**

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of 'protected characteristics'

The relevant characteristics are:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The category of age and marriage and civil partnership, which are covered as part of the equality duty, do not apply to education and service provision in schools.

Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Act as:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
- Indirect discrimination
  - Discrimination arising from disability
  - Failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people).

The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from:

- harassment, in relation to disability, race and sex, and
- victimisation.

A protected act is:

- making a claim or complaint of discrimination under the Act
- helping someone else make a claim by giving evidence or information
- making an allegation that the school or someone else has breached the Act
- doing anything else in connection with the Act.

Pupils must not be victimised because their parent, sibling or friend has carried out a protected act. Benedict Biscop CE Academy will not victimise parents who make complaints.

### **Positive action**

The Act contains provisions which enables the school to take 'positive action', i.e. provide additional benefits to pupils with protected characteristics, to address any disadvantage they may face. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination, which would be providing preferential treatment for a particular disadvantaged pupil/group of pupils, which exceeds the positive action conditions.

As it is never unlawful to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, Benedict Biscop CE Academy is permitted to positively discriminate and may do so, in favour of disabled pupils through curriculum opportunities or access to curriculum opportunities if this enabled their fair access to the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils.

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BENEDICT BISCOP CE ACADEMY?**

**The leaders of the Academy are committed to focussing attention on the needs and interests of every individual, child or young person, finding key ways to learning, providing the most expert teaching and supporting those children who find learning most difficult and who have been identified as disadvantaged.**

**There will be a focus on narrowing the gap of any group where underachievement is evident. Through analysis of progress every half term, identifying children where achievement is not as strong as expected, barriers to learning will be investigated and intervention targeted to accelerating progress. The impact of this will be reviewed every half term and actions taken if necessary.**

**Measures of progress will be compared to national statistics for pupils of the same characteristics and all pupils nationally to ensure expectations of every group remain high.**

**Bullying and incidents of harassment or prejudice are recorded and reported to governors termly. There is zero tolerance to any forms of bullying. Procedures which involve both pupils and parents work well.**

**The outstanding curriculum supports collaborative learning and there are few incidents of poor behaviour which impede the learning of others, ensuring equality of opportunity across the school. Attendance is outstanding, through rigorous monitoring challenge and a relentless pursuit of an appropriate, dynamic curriculum which enable pupils to achieve a high standard.**

**The outstanding curriculum seeks to challenge and disrupt any forms of learning which privileges some school and ethnic groups over others.**

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding - this includes many opportunities to break down barriers through curriculum development of practices which become inherent in everyday practice.**

**School Profile:**

Benedict Biscop CE Academy is an inner city Church of England primary school, [Diocese of Durham, serving Wearmouth Deanery], in Doxford Ward.

There are currently 265 pupils on roll. Our pupil profile is mainly white British. 2.8% non British white. With over 90% pupils coming from within 0.5 miles of the locality. Our admissions policy is fair and does not discriminate against any group of people applying for a position at the school. Church places were withdrawn in 2015.

The Academy is very popular and oversubscribed. There is a 30 place nursery with opportunities for full day places [which support parents returning to work or into full time education].

The academy's religious foundation is very well established. However, we have a minority of children representing other Faiths and this is considered a priority in our RE curriculum and in the way we celebrate all our community events.

The locality is changing - area consists of "1970s" owner occupied houses and flats with an increasing number of private landlords with more of our families living in rented accommodation. Area of Local authority housing has been recently renovated. The school is increasing in deprivation as identified on the national indices.

New developments have recently begun near Moorside, resulting in plans for the school to be extended. This may result in change deprivation levels.

School support parents - training TA and support staff - **previously** 6 parents employed - "home grown". Out of School Hours Care facilities - support parents with child care for extended periods to fit in with training placements.

**Attainment on entry is typical - with pupil attainment across a full range of abilities in different areas, providing a spike profile which changes year on year.** **Over recent years**, there have been an increasing number of pupils involved with external services [mainly speech and language] on entry to the academy in the last 3 years, and a higher % being identified as having language difficulties, by school staff during the foundation stage.

**For the last few years the number of boys and girls within the academy is quite equal.**

The proportion of pupils where English is not their first language is low, with an increase in minority groups.

**The proportion of pupils with SEN Support is currently 15%. Pupils with Statement/ Education Health Care Plan is currently 0.2% The school has an increasing number of pupils with significant complex needs. The school has an increasing number of pupils identified with ASD and moderate learning difficulties.**

Although the % of pupils eligible for free school meals **11% is** below National, there is an increasing number of pupils from low income families who are moving into rented accommodation as our school catchment is changing.

Many families have high expectations and aspirations for their children.

Many families are ambitious for their children in all aspects and are very supportive of their children's education. Attendance has been consistently high for 5 years as school consider this is an area where

we encourage parents and pupils, recognising the importance of attendance and regular routine and commitment.

Workforce information:

We have a vibrant, staff who represent many of the groups stated, whose diversity is celebrated providing enriched experiences for our community. We actively consider all diverse groups during our recruitment procedures and seek to maintain a balance of identified groups. We have increased the appointments of male teachers and now have **2 male teachers and employ 2 male support staff.**

However, the single premise for all appointments is excellence, the best person available through a safer recruitment process against a measured person specification will be recruited to the academy. Many Governors have attended Safer Recruitment Training.

We have a group of Directors who represent many of the groups stated, whose diversity and experience enrich the work of the Academy

### **Responsibility for ensuring that the Academy does not breach the Equality Act**

The Academy's Local Governing Body is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Equality Act is not breached within Benedict Biscop CE Academy. It does take all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation from taking place, and the detailed action plan accompanying this scheme sets out how we will do this.

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the academy complies with all relevant equality legislation
- Ensuring that the Academy Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed
- Making sure that the school Equality Scheme clearly outlines how it will deal with issues faced by the identified 'protected groups'
- Producing regular information for all staff and governors about the scheme and how it is working
- Making sure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the scheme and arranging any training and support needed
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying and bullying related to gender or disability.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist, homophobic and other hate incidents
- Being able to recognise bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equal opportunities and good race relations
- Avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability or gender
- Keeping up to date with laws on discrimination
- Taking up training and learning opportunities

. Delivering a well planned curriculum which enable all groups to gain accurate knowledge without prejudice, enabling their learning environments to celebrate diversity and adopting teaching approaches which support a high level of collaborative work between all pupils.

Planning a range of activities which are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, which ensures that all pupils achieve their best.

. Having the same high expectation for every pupil in the academy.

The **Headteacher** has overall responsibility for dealing with bullying, hate-incidents or discrimination.

The **Headteacher** and staff are responsible for ensuring that visitors and contractors are aware of and adhere to the Single Equality Scheme.

### **How we will meet our responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act**

In order to meet its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act the academy has undertaken Equality Impact Assessments on all of our policies, plans, projects and functions.

These assessments have allowed us to identify barriers to achieving equality for all and eliminate all forms of discrimination in the academy setting. As a result of the assessments, a three-year action plan has been devised setting out the academy's priorities for improvements, including actions and timescales.

The plan is designed to improve outcomes for children, families, staff and community groups using the Academy, who may be disadvantaged because of inequality.

We will monitor the actions developed through the Equality Impact Assessments regularly, and will review the plan annually.

### **Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

The following groups have been consulted in developing the plan are:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening,
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the school council, Personal Development lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school, learning walks, teaching and learning reviews
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans
- Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support
- Feedback at Local Governing body meetings
- Community groups

### **Monitoring and reviewing the action plan**

This is a three year scheme and action plan running from 2020-2023. However, we will monitor the equality information used to inform the action plan and the outcomes resulting from it, through the Personal Development and Senior Leadership Team

### **Publishing and promoting the Scheme**

The Scheme has been agreed by the Local Governing Body and will be published in the following ways:

- Copies of the scheme will be made available to all staff and governors through the intranet.
- Copies of the scheme will be available for parents/carers to use
- The Scheme will be published on the Academy's website
- Updates on the outcomes detailed in the action plan will be included in the Academy's report to Governors, newsletters to parents and discussions with the School Council and Pupil Forum