Mellor St Mary CE Primary School

Learning Together

Equal Opportunity Policy

2026-2029

Vision

The greatest commandment Jesus taught was to love God and to love your neighbour – To love one another as I have loved you. Within this commandment is the foundation of the Christian view of society. At Mellor St Mary Church of England School, we encourage all our children, families and staff to live out this and explore how we respect each other' difference through what we say and do. Our school focusses on the importance of equality and the qualities and character needed to sustain the best social relationships that honour each other regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, age, sexuality or other equality limiting factor.

Each child is a unique being, a child of God, loved and accepted. As such, our school seeks to enable children to develop through an inclusive programme of teaching that is based on Christian principles, which respects the diversity of the world we live in today.



'I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.' (Psalm 139:14)

1 Introduction

The Equal Opportunity policy of Mellor St Mary CE Primary School is embedded in the ethos of our school and is supported by our Core Values, Mission Statement and policies for: Equal Opportunities, Behaviour and Discipline, Respecting All, Anti Bullying, Safeguarding SEND and Child Protection as well as the Personal, Social, Health and Relationship Education Policy. This policy is intended to ensure that our school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, religion, disability, gender or background. 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 accords with legislation:

Primary Legislation

1. **Equality Act 2010** (most important)
    - Protects individuals from discrimination.
    - Covers the protected characteristics including age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage/civil partnership.
    - Places duties on schools to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.
2. **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** – under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
    - Requires schools to have due regard to equality in decision-making and publish equality information and objectives
3. **Human Rights Act 1998**
    - Supports principles of dignity, respect, fairness, and equal treatment in schools.
4. **Children Act 1989** and **Children Act 2004**
    - Promote safeguarding and the welfare of children as a central consideration.
5. **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0–25 years**
    - Supports inclusion and reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND.

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Acts 2002 and 2005;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

2.2 We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.

2.3 We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

2.4 We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.

2.5 We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.

2.6 We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

2.7 We value each pupil's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for all minority groups.

2.8 We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.

3 Racial equality

3.1 In our school, we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups.

3.2 It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see policies for Racial Equality and for Behaviour and Discipline).

3.3 We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. Thus, for example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in school. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

3.4 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

4 Disability non-discrimination

4.1 Some children in our school have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. The school fully meets the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in 2005 and New SEND Code of Practice0-25yrs Sept 2014 . All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled children.

4.2 The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children full access to all areas of learning.

4.3 Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, or modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

5 Gender equality

5.1 Central to Christian theology is the truth that every single one of us in made in the image of God. Everyone of us is loved unconditionally by God. As a Church of England school we offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value. We endure to do all we can to ensure that al children, particularly those who may identify as, or are perceived to be, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender are kept safe and can flourish. (The Church of England Education Office : Valuing All God's Children 2016)

5.2 We recognise that nationally, the achievement of boys is falling behind that of girls. We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible in our school.

5.3 We have put in place a number of measures to raise the achievement of the boys. These include:

- dealing with negative aspects of boys' behaviour, including bullying and name-calling;
- removing gender bias from our resources;
- making sure that our displays reflect boys and men as effective learners and achievers;
- encouraging boys to read fiction.

5.4 To make our teaching more accessible to boys, we:

- begin a lesson by stating the learning outcomes, and giving the 'big picture';
- employ a variety of activities, and include a kinaesthetic element;
- deliver work in bite-sized chunks, with 'brain breaks' and new starts;
- provide challenge, competition and short-term goals;
- give regular positive feedback and rewards;
- set writing tasks that are cross-curricular, that have been modelled first, and for which there are frames and scaffolds available.

5.5 We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to performance. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve the boys' attainment do not do so at the expense of achievement by the girls. We are also respectful of those children who have not yet identified their own gender and may be transitioning

6 The role of governors

6.1 In this policy statement, the governing board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

6.2 The governing board collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this, we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

6.3 The governing board seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.

6.4 The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

6.5 The governing board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

7 The role of the headteacher

7.1 It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and s/he is supported by the governing board in so doing.

7.2 It is the headteacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

7.3 The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.

7.4 The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.

7.5 The headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.

7.6 The headteacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

8 The role of the class teacher

8.1 Class teachers recognise their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

8.2 When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

8.3 We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history. In geography, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

8.4 All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book and draw them to the immediate attention of the headteacher.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 It is the responsibility of our governing board to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the headteacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board every three years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.

Review Date: June 2029

Signed: J.Embley-Peers (Headteacher)

Signed: P.Skupski (Chair of Governors)

Date: 01.06.2026