



Approved by:	Full Governing Body
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Gumley House School FCJ exists to provide a Catholic education for all students. In partnership with parents/carers, we help each student to develop with dignity as a person in relationship with Jesus Christ and each other. The six FCJ values are at the core of the Equalities Policy at Gumley: Companionship, Dignity, Excellence, Gentleness, Hope and Justice. We value each and every member of the community as unique and take every opportunity to support their well-being.

At Gumley we believe that good student behaviour and discipline at school is fundamental to student and school progress, the raising of educational standards and to increasing educational inclusion. The words, beliefs and actions of Marie Madeleine d'Houet, foundress of the FCJ Community, provide us all at Gumley with the clearest guidance as to our responsibility to those in our care.

This Policy clarifies the underlying principles and statutory requirements around Equal opportunities and outlines the Gumley House approach to its successful implementation.

INTRODUCTION

At Gumley House School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life, as highlighted in the school's mission statement.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Gumley encourages a life-long openness to education and a joy in learning which will remain throughout life. Guided by the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels we promote a community of love, service and prayer:

- Each student's worth is recognised.
- Each students's contribution is valued.
- Where no one benefits at the expense of another.
- The school group look out to the wider community.

We seek to develop respect for others. We help pupils realise that talents are gifts to be developed for the good of the human community regardless of race, gender or religion. We encourage concern for the disabled, the marginalised, the needy and all those who are in any sense unable to live a life of full human dignity."

The achievement of our students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. (See our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy) We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Gumley, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

MAINSTREAMING EQUALTY INTO POLICY AND PRACTICE

At Gumley, we operate equality of opportunity in our day-to-day practice in the following ways:

Teaching and Learning

- Ensuring that all our students have access to the same broad and balanced curriculum, appropriately differentiated to meet individual needs and aspirations.
- Nominating a member of the senior leadership team to coordinate safeguarding arrangements.
- Using progress data to improve the ways in which we provide support for individuals and groups of students.
- Monitoring achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and address any issues such as attainment gaps should they arise;
- Taking into account the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensuring equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of our school community, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promoting attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Providing opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seeking to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staff room discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy and exclusion procedures. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to our colleagues at Gumley House School. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. We are a Catholic school and therefore the posts of Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, Head of Religious Education are reserved for practising Catholics.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

At Gumley, we ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

EQUALITY AND THE LAW

We meet the statutory duties required with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010). Under the Equality Act 2010, we do not discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.'

The protected characteristics include:

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

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to students, and so Gumley is free to arrange students in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to public bodies including Academy Schools. It covers all seven equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. It rightly requires us to 'have due regard to' the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

Having 'due regard' in this context means that when we are taking significant decisions we must give considerations to the equality implications.

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy outlines our aims in supporting students with SEND needs.

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish this Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this plan.

The above is outlined in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Gumley actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we:

- Prepare and publish this Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this plan.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007. This is exemplified within our school values.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of Governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and will continue to do all it can to ensure that Gumley is fully inclusive to all students, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics. This is in line with our FCJ and Catholic Ethos.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at Gumley on grounds of the protected characteristics.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that Gumley gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.

The governors welcome all applications to join the Gumley community, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in Gumley on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment.

The Role of the Head teacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

It is the Head teacher's role to implement Gumley's Equality Policy and she is supported by the governing body in doing so. It is the Head teacher's role to ensure that our colleagues are aware of the Equality Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The Head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of Gumley life.

The Head teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

At Gumley,

- all staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality policy and objectives.
- all staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- all staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head teacher.
- teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

At Gumley, harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a student's individual circumstances.

Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences. Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Head teacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Head teacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person"

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a prohibited act") in connection with the Act, e.g. making an allegation of discrimination.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
 - Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

At Gumley, it should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the wellbeing of the whole school (refer to our Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct).