

ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Equal Opportunities Policy

2026 - 2028

Our English Martyrs' School community aims to follow the example of Christ in welcoming, recognising, fostering and developing each individual as a unique and special gift of GOD with value and dignity



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

RATIONALE:

Education is a powerful vehicle for transmitting values. It can also challenge them. In keeping with the Borough of Southwark's policy, English Martyrs' Catholic Primary aims to combat discrimination and prejudice and ensure that all forms of discriminatory practice are removed. As this happens, there will be an education and service of a high quality to all, irrespective of race, gender, class or disability.

AIMS

1. At English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, we are committed to equal opportunities for all and support the Borough Equal Opportunities Policy.
2. As a Catholic School, we support the statement from the Bishops of Southwark in their policy on equality of race and opportunity in Catholic schools which states –

“All men and women are of equal importance in the sight of God and should be equally accorded the respect and dignity due to the children of God”.

OBJECTIVES

- a) At English Martyrs' Catholic Primary, in order to provide equality of opportunity we will endeavor to ensure that individual needs are assessed. Abilities, talents, present and previous experiences are monitored to give each child their full and appropriate entitlement to educational and spiritual provision.
- b) All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should responsibly transmit the values of equality and justice by developing an ethos with a multicultural, anti-racial perspective and by fostering an awareness of gender, disability and social background.
- c) Staff should encourage the children to think for themselves by critically analysing and evaluating evidence and information, thus helping them to avoid judgements based on prejudice.
- d) Staff should be aware of and take steps to avoid cultural, gender and social bias in assessment and evaluation.
- e) All management and school curriculum decisions should have equal opportunities as a base as should all initiatives on the school development plan.

SCHOOL PRACTICE

In order to implement the aims and objectives in our Equal Opportunities Policy Statement we looked at specific areas in our school:

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies will underline the aims of equality of opportunity mentioned in our statement.

We meet as a Catholic community to celebrate our cultural and personal identities and those of others. We remind ourselves of the principles of Christ's gospel and how we observe these principles at work in the school.

DISPLAY

Displays, where possible, will emphasise our commitment to celebrating each child's worth, showing an awareness of culture, language, gender and ability and will contain positive, non-stereotypical and challenging images in relation to gender, ethnicity, nationality, culture, disability, age and religion.

STAFF

Staff should regularly re-evaluate attitudes and build an awareness of issues. If staff hear/see racist incidents they should follow the procedure set out in the schools' Behaviour Policy for dealing with racist incidents (ref: Behaviour Policy)

In recruiting staff – age, gender, ethnic origin, disability, married or single status should not be a consideration – only qualifications, suitability and experience to the proper discharge of duties should be considerations.

All staff are entitled to professional development with budget constraints.

ADMISSIONS

Children and their families must be aware of the aims and objectives of both Church and School including their policies on equality of opportunities and undertake to support them (Criteria for Admission)

PARENTS

The school will strive to involve all parents in their children's work
And be welcoming to all by means of reports, school and class newsletters.

CURRICULUM

All pupils should have planned access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The curriculum should take account of the school's responsibility to prepare the children for life in an ethnically and culturally diverse society.

In the classroom:

- All pupils are aware that the teacher has very high expectations of them and are continually challenged to reach higher standards.
- There is a range of teaching styles, including those which foster motivation and a sense of personal worth by drawing on pupils' own personal experiences.
- The classroom is managed in such a way that all pupils feel engaged in learning and are all motivated to persevere and contribute.
- The teacher fosters a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust amongst pupils.
- Both in teaching and in assessment, appropriate use is made of practical tasks and activities, objects and artefacts and pictorial and visual materials.
- On class outings and when receiving visiting speakers. Pupils learn from a diversity of experiences, perspectives and viewpoints.
- Displays and resources include

Support staff work in tandem with the class or subject teacher and play a full part in classroom management.

RESOURCES

Alongside the accepted standards by which we select books, we will consider the following criteria:

- We should seek books that illustrate the positive contribution from people from ethnic minorities; women and people with disabilities have made and are making in society.
- Look closely at illustrations. Good illustrations depict particular people in particular settings, avoiding the pitfalls of caricature.
- Look carefully at facts and check accuracy.
- Check the original date of publication. Old books have value although history does not change – the interpretation of events and social attitudes do.
- The experiences of all children are reflected and used sensitively as a resource in class teaching.
- Staff have information on pupils' home and community languages.
- Staff follow agreed procedures for dealing with racist, ignorant or insensitive comments made by pupils during class discussions.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Staff will meet for discussion on the progress of the policy.

Information gained at these meetings will inform future action on policy review and development of appropriate resources and INSET needs.

ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR

Responsibilities include:

- Developing a policy for Equal Opportunities within the school
- Monitoring the progress and implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Being available for consultation on resources and to support staff.
- To organise staff meetings to evaluate and plan future developments.
- To seek out and to provide INSET opportunities for self and colleagues.