

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY STATEMENT (PSED)



Introduction

Rural Church Schools Academy Trust (RCSAT) is committed to meeting the three aims of the general duty of the Equality Act 2010 and recognises that the Act covers all aspects of the school's work and establishes nine strands or 'protected characteristics' related to:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race
- Gender
- Gender identity and transgender
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- Religion and belief
- Sexual identity and orientation

RCSAT acknowledges that the Act comprises a general duty and specific duties.

The general duty (also known as the public sector equality duty - PSED) requires all schools – including other state-funded educational settings and academies – to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

RCSAT Trustees, LGC's and Staff are all aware of the implications of the Equality Act 2010.

Definition of 'due regard'

RCSAT recognise that there are six principles established by case law underlying due regard (sometimes known as 'the Brown principles', after the specific case which generated them) –awareness, timeliness, rigour, non-delegation, continuous, and recordkeeping:

1. Awareness: all staff should know and understand what the law requires.

2. Timeliness: the implications for equalities of new policies and practices should be considered before they are introduced.

3. Rigour: there should be rigorous and open-minded analysis of statistical evidence, and careful attention to the views of the workforce and stakeholders.

4. Non-delegation: compliance with the PSED cannot be delegated.

5. Continuous: due regard for equalities should be happening all the time.

6. Record-keeping: it is good practice to keep documentary records to show that equalities have been considered when decisions are being made.

Implications for RCSAT Leaders

- RCSAT acknowledges the implications of the duty and will ensure that there are the necessary processes, policies and procedures to ensure that it meets its legal duty.
- Having 'due regard' for the 3 aims of the general duty is likely to entail that RCSAT ensures there are processes of consultation and engagement where appropriate with people who are affected by a school's decisions.

- RCSAT also acknowledges its duty to publish information detailing any consultation and engagement and any equality analysis undertaken in complying with the duty.
- There is no requirement to take account of national priorities in formulating school equality objectives
- RCSAT has published policies available on the website or through the school office. The Equality Policy

What does 'due regard' look like in the classroom and in the school?

RCSAT regularly reviews its curriculum provision to ensure that it is broad, balanced and non-stereotypical. In doing so RCSAT schools try to ensure that they:

- Take account of and raises awareness of equality and diversity issues in planning and delivery of the curriculum
- Keep a record of how and why the school has reached a decision or done something in a particular way, e.g. using progress and attainment data to evidence why pupils have been allocated to certain groups
- Continuously revisit planning and classroom practice to ensure they it is still relevant, appropriate and has a positive impact on the pupils and their learning about the wider world view
- Listen to and involves children and families
- Are vigilant and confident to respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents when they occur

Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties regulations require schools:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- To prepare and publish equality objectives.

Evidence of Compliance:

Elimination of discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

The philosophy of our school talks of valuing all of our pupils. Our Single Equality Policy states that we are committed to giving all our pupils every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. Within our ethos we do not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. We actively tackle discrimination of those protected characteristics under the PSED and promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst all. We aim to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our pupils. We are committed to ensuring that positive action is taken where necessary to redress the balance of inequality that may exist. This applies not only to pupils but includes staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and others.

The following policies support the school's compliance:

- Equality Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Teaching and Learning
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Accessibility Plan

All concerns around an infringement of any of the protected characteristics are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. All incidents in or out of class are recorded and kept on file. Incidents clearly identified are reported to a senior member of staff. If this were children, both sets of parents are informed of what has happened and how it has been dealt with. Records of discussions are kept.

Preventative measures for bullying of any kind are in place:

- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in school curriculum in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour. Use of KIVA resources.
- Participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education.
- Consider the use of specific strategies on a regular basis and implement them if appropriate.

Refer to Dignity and Respect Policy for more information.

As a school we take positive action to challenge and prevent racism, and to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society. The school takes action to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups. Any racist behaviour is challenged and reported and dealt with in line with LA policy.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Using the ASP and IDSR summary report (data for the school from the Department for Education) which compares the school's data with national data considering performance in addition to the school's own tracking system to identify possible differences within various groups
- Monitor responses to participation and success in wider educational and social experiences using the School Council and questionnaires distributed to all stakeholders

Fostering good relations across all characteristics- between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Our school promotes good relations between people and groups of all kinds in many ways:

- Values Education – promoting different values throughout the school through worship and curriculum e.g. friendship, tolerance, cooperation etc
- Induction of newly arrived pupils through a buddy system
- Raising awareness of groups who are not represented in the immediate community through:
 - Worship
 - Support for charitable organisations
 - Visiting speakers from other groups, world faiths and beliefs are invited into school to work with staff and pupils
- Opportunities are available through the Connected curriculum, residential visits and through Fair Trade activities for children to develop their cultural understanding
- PSHE curriculum looking at anti-bullying, relationships etc
- Children are expected to respect all members of staff irrespective of their roles and responsibilities
- RE curriculum – looking at diversity and understanding other religions and cultures
- Behaviour for learning Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy – including Anti-Bullying Week
- Worship dealing with relevant issues
- Involvement with local communities
- Links Internationally