

St Francis of Assisi Catholic College

'Nil satis optimum'



Public Sector Equality Duty Statement (PSED)

November 2021

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1. Our ethos

St Francis of Assisi Catholic College (referred to forthwith as ‘the College’) seeks to develop the whole person. We are a faith Community inspired in our mission by our motto ‘Nil Satis Optimum’- ‘nothing but the best is good enough’. In striving to fulfil this we follow our mission statement which in practice this means that we seek to:

- Encourage, support and inspire young people and the wider College community in their journey of faith.
- Create a well-ordered community where everyone is valued and respected.
- Develop the intellectual, creative, physical, spiritual and religious potential of every student and encourage involvement in the wider life of the College community.
- Work in partnership with parents, parishes, local industry and commerce and the wider community in a spirit of mutual service for the benefit of all.
- Prepare our young people for the life beyond college and in particular to develop personal integrity, moral values and a sense of justice so that they "preach the Gospel at all times, use words if necessary" (St Francis).

2. Context

- The public sector equality duty (PSED), known as the ‘equality duty’, was introduced by the [Equality Act 2010](#) (the Act). The Act brought previous equalities law under one umbrella, replaced existing race, disability and gender equality duties and extended protection to further ‘protected characteristics’.
- The equality duty applies to all types of schools and colleges across all phases and places duties on leaders, trustees and governors.
- The equality duty should be integrated into the way that a school or college carries out all of its functions.

- The duty provides a framework to help focus attention on the impact of decisions and policies on particular groups, to identify priorities and strategies to tackle them.
- The equality duty has two main parts: a 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'.

3. General equality duty: Overview

- The equality duty requires schools and colleges to think about the interests of and effects on all students, staff and the whole community in everything that it does, including decision making and all policies. They must act in a way which is fair, non-discriminatory, and which does not put individuals or groups at a disadvantage. It must develop strategies to rectify situations where particular groups are at a disadvantage in order to meet the different needs of all learners.
- The duty makes clear that this will not always be about treating all people exactly the same. Schools and colleges must consider where there is a need to overcome existing inequalities and the strategies they might develop to overcome these.
- In most instances schools and colleges will already collect sufficient information to fulfil their equality duty. Discretion lies with leaders to decide if they have enough information about students with different protected characteristics to meet their equality duty.
- The equality duty has three main elements to which schools and colleges must give 'due regard' to in carrying out their functions as public bodies. Across all the protected characteristics they must:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other unlawful conduct in the Equality Act 2010;
 - advance equality of opportunity; and
 - foster good relations.

The equalities impact in respect of each of these elements should be recorded, monitored and kept under constant review.

4. Specific equality duties: Overview

The specific duties require public bodies including schools and colleges to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the equality duty, and to specific, measurable equality objectives. Schools and colleges must:

- publish information on how they are complying with the equality duty; and
- devise and publish their own equality objectives.

It is up to individual institutions to determine how to comply with the specific duties, including how they balance competing priorities and set priorities. Compliance will look different depending on the context and size of the school or college.

There are further specific duties for employers in schools and colleges with over 150 employees. Public bodies with over 150 employees must consider how their activities as employers affect people who share different protected characteristics and publish information to show that they did this; however, this does not apply to the College as it has 140 employees.

5. Protected characteristics

The Equality Act extended previous race, gender and disability equalities legislation to cover the wider 'protected characteristics' listed below:

- Sex;
- Age;
- Race;
- Disability;
- Religion or belief;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Sexual orientation;
- Gender reassignment; and
- Pregnancy or maternity.

NB1* age: a relevant characteristic considering a school or college's duties as an employer but not in relation to students.

NB2** gender reassignment: there has been some confusion about the application of the duty for children identifying as transgender, particularly in single sex schools. As one of these characteristics, a school must not treat students less favourably because of their gender reassignment.

6. Due regard

Schools and colleges must integrate the equality duty into the way it carries out all of their functions. 'Due regard' means giving 'relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty' and actively consider the equality implications for students and staff with protected characteristics in all aspects of its policy development and decision making.

Schools and colleges must separately consider each of the three elements of the duty (e.g. eliminating discrimination must be considered separately from fostering good relations). Schools and colleges should record the steps they have taken to show 'due regard'.

7. Legislation and guidance

This Statement meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#) - which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#) - which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This Statement is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

8. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the College, including to staff, students and parents;
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years;
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Head Teacher; and
- Nominate an Equality Link Governor.

The Equality Link Governor will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for Equality to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed;
- Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this Statement;
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training; and
- Report back to the Governing Body regarding any issues.

The Head Teacher will ensure that the designated member of staff for Equality will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students; and
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to the Equality Link Governor.

The designated member of staff for Equality will:

- Support the Head Teacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students;
- Meet with the Equality Link Governor to raise and discuss any issues; and
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary.

All College staff will:

- Have regard to this Statement and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 10.

9. College Commitment

a) Eliminating discrimination

- The College is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.
- Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

- Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the [Equality Act](#), for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a formal meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- New staff receive training on the [Equality Act](#) as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year.
- The College has a designated member of staff for monitoring Equality, and an Equality Link Governor. They liaise regarding any issues and make the senior leadership team and governors aware of these as appropriate.

b) Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the [DfE guidance](#) on the [Equality Act](#), the College aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. students with disabilities, or homosexual students who are being subjected to homophobic bullying);
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim students to pray at prescribed times); and
- Encouraging all students who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the College will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how students with different characteristics are performing;
- Analyse attainment data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response to it and publish this information as appropriate;
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. reduction in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying); and
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own students.

c) Fostering good relations

The College aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, but also PSHE curriculum and Values Education and activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, students will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures;
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Students will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute;
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising College trips and activities based around the local community;
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any tensions between different groups of students within the College. For example, our College Council has

representatives from different year groups and is formed of students from a range of backgrounds. All students are encouraged to participate in College activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures; and

- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

d) Equality considerations in decision making

In making decisions and in its decision-making processes the College will ensure that it has:

- Due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made;
- Always considered the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a College trip or activity is being planned, consideration will be given as to whether it cuts across any religious holidays, is accessible to students with disabilities and has equivalent facilities for both boys and girls; and
- Maintained a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show how it has actively considered its equality duties and asked itself relevant questions. For example, this will be recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning College trips and activities, completed by the member of staff organising the trip or activity and then stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

10. Equality Objectives

Objective 1

- Undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends with regard to race, gender and disability and report on this to the Governors' Personnel committee.
- Why we have chosen this objective: To best reflect the growing diversity in our school and so that there is representation and voice for all.
- To achieve this objective, we plan to: Consider protected characteristics as part of the application process, target advertise wherever possible and reach the widest audience. Conduct exit interviews to better understand staff movement.
- Timescale(s): Annually to show and track trends to include long term cover

Objective 2

- Have in place a reasonable adjustment agreement for all staff with disabilities, to meet their needs better and ensure that any disadvantages they experience are addressed.
- Why we have chosen this objective: It is important that at SFA we model equality and fairness and work with staff so that they can be the best version of themselves.
- To achieve this objective, we plan to: Hold one to one meetings annually with any staff member who has a disability
- Timescale(s): Annually or as need arises

Objective 3

- Increase the representation of staff from local black and minority ethnic communities over a 4-year period so that this group increases above the current **10% (15 staff)** of the workforce, paying particular regard to our support staff representation.
- Why we have chosen this objective: The staff body must represent the student body so that all feel represented and see

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Actively recruit staff from local black and minority ethnic communities as part of the application process, target advertise wherever possible and reach the widest audience.

Timescale(s): Four year review

Objective 4

Train all staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure that unconscious bias has no place in the recruitment process at SFA.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Use training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

Timescale(s): Annual review

Objective 5

Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.

Why we have chosen this objective: So that we are visible in our positive approach about employing disabled people. At SFA we do not want there to be any barrier to people with disability working in our school.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Use the Two Tick symbol on every advert.

Timescale(s): On going

11. Monitoring arrangements

- The College will update the equality information we publish, (described in sections 9 and 10 above) at least annually.
- This Statement will be reviewed by the Governing Body at least every 4 years.
- Any revised version of this Statement will be approved by accordingly by the Governing Body or an appropriate sub-committee of it.

12. Links to other policies

This Statement links to and may be read in conjunction with the following College policies:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Conduct
- Safer Recruitment and Selection
- Anti-bullying
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety Policy
- GDPR
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Educational Visits Including Overnight Stays
- Accessibility Plan
- Risk Assessments (as appropriate)