



St Mary
Magdalene
Academy

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”
James 3.13

All students are entitled to equality of educational opportunity irrespective of ability, background, ethnicity, gender or sexuality and are encouraged at all times to make the maximum possible progress.

All persons associated with St Mary Magdalene Academy must be committed to its equal opportunities policy and all staff are made aware of the legal obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended under the Race Equality Act of 2001 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The following policy is drawn to the attention of all staff, governors, parents/carers and students. The support of all in maintaining and further developing the equal opportunities policy is enlisted.

The Academy fosters respect, tolerance, understanding and friendship amongst all members of its Christian community in order to prepare students for life in our multi-cultural and multi-skilled society.

The Academy recognises that staff expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of students and, as such, places great emphasis on positive behaviour by all staff towards students.

The Academy encourages awareness amongst staff and students of role stereotyping and discrimination and ensures that the impact of such behaviours is understood.

1. Curriculum and Access

The Academy recognises that it is a major part of its role to ensure that every student develops to his or her full potential and is motivated to succeed in an atmosphere that values and accepts each individual regardless of origin and welcomes the diversity represented within its population. (See Inclusion Policy).

The awareness of the benefits of positive relationships for the Academy and its community is raised in a variety of ways.

Stereotyping within the Academy is monitored and challenged. An atmosphere of open discussion and mutual support enables the students at St Mary Magdalene Academy to question cultural assumptions and biases and to be given the skills necessary to recognise and combat prejudice and discrimination, this happens in many curriculum areas.

Equal opportunities are an integral part of the whole curriculum and influences all subjects; the curriculum reflect the interests and achievements of all members of society. A systematic programme of awareness-raising amongst staff, parents/carers, students and governors is pursued. Resources used by teachers are monitored for stereotyping; new resources may not favour any particular group nor portray stereotypes. Use may be made of unsuitable materials to illustrate bias, stereotyping, etc. to raise the awareness of students and promote appropriate attitudes. Work produced by students which reflects stereotyping will be used positively.

Incidents of bullying and racial abuse are monitored and recorded centrally. Difficult or sensitive issues are dealt with carefully and an appropriate response by staff recognised and encouraged. Behaviour which is sexist or racist (including physical and verbal abuse, see 'Race Equality' and 'Anti-Bullying Policies') is dealt with very seriously under the related Academy policies and procedures. Offensive comments, whether made intentionally or not, are dealt with firmly. Staff members may not ignore any form of abuse. Steps are taken to explain fully to the perpetrator and the victim that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any suspected child abuse must be reported to the Academy's appointed Child Protection Officer (See Child Protection Policy).

GCSE, and other academic results are monitored for evidence of inequality and practical measures aimed at tackling any inequality noted are instituted.

Displays of consistently high quality are regularly updated and monitored for appropriate messages of equal opportunities.

Graffiti which is offensive on any grounds is not tolerated. Literature and other materials of a prejudicial or discriminatory nature are confiscated from any student who brings it to the Academy and measures are taken to prevent

repetition. Such incidents are dealt with severely under the Academy's disciplinary policy.

Parents/carers and students have the opportunity to lodge complaints if they are concerned about discrimination or any form of abuse. Complaints are noted and action taken recorded in an incident file. There must always be an atmosphere where every member of the Academy feels able to use this procedure. (See Complaints Policy).

Positive role models in our own teaching are sought; imbalances in role models are guarded against; and unsterotypical roles in the Academy are encouraged and fostered.

2. Staff Appointments

The Academy recognises and welcomes the provisions and spirit of the legislation and existing codes of practice produced to promote and secure equal employment opportunities for all.

The Academy aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained, promoted and retained on the basis of need, ability, skills, aptitudes and other objective criteria. In this respect the Academy strives to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, religion, cultural or national origins, gender, age, sexuality, marital status or physical ability, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of the job. The Academy is aware of the need to guard against structural and unintentional discrimination as well as personal and deliberate discrimination.

Notes for Guidance

A. Staff Recruitment/Selection

- i The Academy recognises that it is enriched by having staff drawn from diverse backgrounds, irrespective of religion, however, all staff are expected to support the Christian ethos of the Academy.
- ii Advertisements and job details serve equal opportunity requirements. Applications from under-represented categories are always welcome but no attempt is made to achieve any form of quota.
- iii Advertisements and job details are written in a manner that is consistent with the job description and specification. No discriminatory requirement is included unless it is a genuine occupational qualification.

- iv Interviews/selection procedures respect equal opportunity requirements.
- v Care is taken to ensure that interviewing/selection panels are not unnecessarily uniform in their membership.
- vi The criteria used in selection is derived from the candidate specification as given within the job details.
- vii Any requests for job sharing/splitting are considered positively and fairly. Applicants are advised if operational/service reasons make such arrangements impractical.
- viii If selection tests are to be used, candidates are advised in advance and assured of their confidentiality.
- ix Unsuccessful applicants at interview are offered constructive feedback with regard to their application and performance at interview. Candidates papers plus any final selection notes are retained for at least six months.

B. Staff Development and Support

- i All staff are encouraged to develop their skills and gain experience.
- ii The training needs of all staff is systematically assessed. Through Performance Management. There is no assumption that any staff do not need training or development. (See Performance Management Policy).

C. Dealing with Complaints

- i All members of staff are required to maintain acceptable standards of performance and conduct and to perform their duties and responsibilities within their terms and conditions of service and the policies of St Mary Magdalene Academy. Failure to conform to these is dealt with in accordance with School Disciplinary Procedures.
- ii Respect for each other as individuals is the basis of our code. Staff expected to take all practicable steps to prevent the occurrence of all forms of discrimination and harassment. These might include:
 - Belittling and other inappropriate language;
 - Verbal abuse;
 - Graffiti;
 - Unwelcome physical contact.

- iii If any individual has a complaint of harassment or discrimination they are asked to report it to one of the Senior Management Team. All such allegations will be pursued through the Academy's grievance or disciplinary procedures.

Change History

Date	What Changed	Committee Date Approved
23 February 2007	New	23 February 2007
Derivation	Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended under the Race Equality Act of 2001 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975	
Revision Policy	Review every three years	