

# Gender Equality Scheme

April 2007 – April 2010

**Cardinal Hume Catholic School**

## 1. Vision, Values and Ethos

Cardinal Hume Catholic School is deeply committed to the principles of equality. We have a caring and supportive school ethos that seeks to value all individuals and ensure that they achieve their potential. Our school is active in its role in promoting equality of opportunity for all boys and girls, men and women, who make up our school community.

Through our policies and practices we strive to eliminate gender discrimination and harassment that present barriers to both staff and pupils achieving their full potential. We actively promote positive, respectful attitudes and relationships between and amongst all members of our school community and encourage them to be active partners in the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where all boys and girls can develop their maximum potential and feel valued as individuals who can contribute to the life of our school and society in general.

We have robust and supportive policies in place that are underpinned by our Catholic ethos which ensures that our practices actively promote equality of opportunity amongst staff and do not in any way discriminate against either men or women in any area of recruitment, retention, promotion, training or any aspect of employment.

We are committed towards ensuring that the development, implementation and monitoring of our gender equality scheme is the vehicle for actively embedding gender equality within our policies and practices.

## 2. The Legal Context

The Equality Act was introduced in 2006 to ensure fair and equal treatment and the elimination of discriminatory practice for all. In recognition of the significant contribution public authorities can make towards equality for all, a gender equality duty (GED) was established within the Act and came into force in April 2007. It requires schools to be proactive in eliminating unlawful sex discrimination and harassment and promoting equality of opportunity between men and women.

The **specific duty** requires a school to show how it will meet the general duty to promote equality across all its areas of responsibility and the exact steps a school will take to enable it to meet the general duty.

- prepare and publish a gender equality scheme
- consider the need to include objectives including pay award objectives
- gather and use information on how school policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and delivery of services

- consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives
- assess the impact (gender impact assessment) of its current and proposed policies and practices
- implement the actions set out in its scheme (action plan) within three years
- report annually against the scheme
- review the scheme every three years

### **3. Developing, monitoring and reporting of our Gender Equality Scheme**

Pupils, staff, parents/carers were consulted through a variety of means in the development of our gender equality scheme. We have done this via *eg*, *questionnaires*, *meetings*, *informal discussions* and incorporated their views where appropriate into our action plan.

Through the above consultation and data analysis we have identified our gender equality objectives that relate the most significant gender issues in our school that we intend to tackle by April 2010. We have considered how our objectives support standards of achievement and are clear on what actions we need to take in order to improve further. We have integrated the processes for developing our scheme into those for school self-evaluation and school development plan.

The process of assessing the impact of all current school policies is underway and will be complete by April 2010. Throughout this process, where we find there is the possibility of any negative impacts on the grounds of gender, action will be taken immediately to eliminate these.

A governor has been appointed as the link governor for gender equality and will ensure that when monitoring the implementation of all current and future school policies, consideration of gender equality issues are adhered to.

A member of the senior leadership team will monitor the implementation of our gender equality action plan (see page 6) and scheme to ensure it leads to less discrimination and greater gender equality.

Progress made against our Gender Equality Scheme will be reported in April 2008 and it will be reviewed by March 2010.

### **4. Gender Equality Scheme Checklist**

#### **Service Provision**

- Information is collected on gender with regards to both pupils and staff and is used to identify priorities and objectives to eliminate discrimination and improve provision of services

## Gender Equality Duty Scheme

- Achievement and attainment data is analysed by gender and action is taken to narrow the gender gap as appropriate to boys and girls
- Boys and girls are actively encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life eg assemblies, school council, physical activities, and where there are barriers to this occurring, action is taken to reduce them to maximise inclusion for all
- Bullying and harassment of pupils on the grounds of gender are monitored and action is taken to eliminate such practice
- Health education provision has been reviewed (including sex education, physical activity and healthy eating) and improvements made to ensure further gender equality
- Stereotyping in terms of gender is actively challenged within and outside of the classroom including challenging gender stereotypes in subject choice and careers advice
- The school environment is accessible and welcoming to visitors at all times of both sexes and parents of both sexes are actively encouraged to participate in their child's education
- The governing body is representative of the pupils, staff and local community it serves

## Employer Duties

- Gender issues are carefully considered when appointing staff eg when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination
- Processes for the implementation of pay systems have been reviewed and we are assured that there is no negative impact on gender equality
- Any bullying and harassment of staff on the grounds of gender would be monitored and action is taken to eliminate such practice
- In the process of procuring goods and services we consider equality of opportunity issues and if appropriate we ensure gender equality requirements are contained within the contract

We have reviewed our practices as employers in relation to the following list of key employment issues (as outlined by the Equal Opportunities Commission Code of Practice on the duty) and are confident that our policies and practices do not discriminate against any members of staff

- recruitment
- managing flexible and part-time working
- managing parental and carers leave
- managing pregnancy and return from maternity leave
- sexual and sexist harassment
- transexual staff
- women under represented in eg senior posts
- grievance and disciplinary procedures
- equal pay
- work based training opportunities

For further information regarding this gender equality scheme please contact *Name of member of staff responsible for the scheme*

This scheme and action plan has been agreed by the full governing body

Signed ..... (Chair of Governors) Date.....

