

Statement of Intent – Promoting Diversity in the Church School Workforce

In the Gospel according to Mark, Jesus Christ bestows upon his followers two unassailable truths:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’ (Mark 12:30-31)

Christ did not give any exceptions for this love of our neighbour, therefore any kind of prejudice or discriminatory behaviour is incompatible with our faith.

We recognise that certain groups in society have been disadvantaged because of discrimination they have faced. Despite progress, unfortunately prejudice still exists today both explicitly and implicitly, and many still face discrimination due to their religion, race, sex, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or age.

Our collective Church teachings on human dignity and dignity in work give us a very clear instruction that our communities must not only stamp out prejudice wherever we find it, but take positive steps to building a more equal society.

As the providers of a third of all schools in England we know the invaluable contribution school staff make in shaping the attitudes of generations of children. Therefore, Church schools must be positive working environments where all pupils and staff can flourish free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation.

As the ecumenical bodies supporting Church schools in England we commit to:

- Promoting understanding of all protected characteristics¹ in Church schools
- Promoting best practice in staff recruitment, retention and development
- Ensuring that all national employment policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic²
- Regular research and monitoring to identify any inequalities and barriers that potentially exist
- Ensuring any guidance on governance matters promotes diversity and equal opportunities
- Working with representative organisations and other faith groups to foster community cohesion

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¹ As outlined in the Equalities Act 2010.

² As above