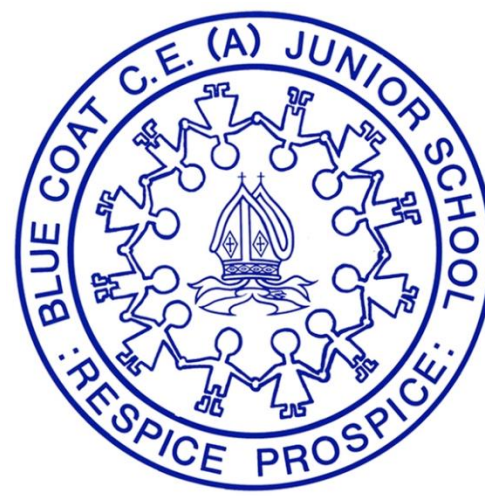


*Love God, love others*

*Let your light shine*



## **BLUE COAT CE (AIDED) INFANT SCHOOL AND JUNIOR SCHOOL'S FEDERATION**

# **Equal Opportunity Policy**

Date reviewed:	November 2023
Executive Headteacher:	Mr. A. Orlik
Chair of Governors:	Ms. A. Edwards

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### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Blue Coat Federation takes its responsibility with regard to equality and diversity very seriously. Our two schools will:

- treat people fairly, justly and with respect in all aspects of the work of the Federation including both education provision and employment
- find ways to support those who are disadvantaged or excluded
- promote inclusion and celebrate diversity
- maintain an ethos which practises Christian values and beliefs, embraces diversity and promotes respect for the beliefs of others and equality for all

1.2 Equal Opportunities in a school situation means ensuring that every individual has equal access to an education or to career development in education. Where equality guidelines or principles are not adhered to, unlawful discrimination may arise.

1.3 The Federation believes that, within education, equality is fundamentally about providing exemplary education, and ensuring that the needs of pupils, parents, staff, governors and the community are identified and met where at all possible. We aim to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

1.4 This policy outlines how our schools ensure that equality is being promoted, what provision is available and what action is to be taken.

### 2 Principles

2.1 This policy has been developed to set out the aims and objectives of the Blue Coat Federation's approach to equalities and the overall commitment to valuing equality, diversity and human rights. It sets out the expectations on our employees and Governors in fulfilling our objective to promote equal opportunities.

2.2 The Federation has adopted a zero tolerance approach to all forms of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (or no religion or belief), sexual orientation, class or social background,

political belief or Trade Union affiliation.

This protocol is in place to provide fairness for all involved in the Federation's employment and education provision. All employees, whether part time, full time, or temporary, and those who volunteer, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees and workers will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of our schools.

- 2.3 The Blue Coat Federation is committed to meeting the needs and expectations of people who use its services. This means fair access for all, ensuring that everyone is

treated with dignity and respect. Information about our services will be provided in accessible formats, as far as reasonable and within resources available.

### **3. Legislative Framework**

- 3.1 This policy has been developed within the framework of existing legislation and relevant Codes of Practice. The main legal provisions are contained within the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 3.2 The Equality Act 2010 has merged previous equality legislation into one Act of Parliament, with some areas being strengthened and others being more a consolidation of previous requirements. The Act covers the main equality duties together with additional requirements for public sector authorities.
- 3.3 The Blue Coat Federation recognises the following as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010:
- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage or civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and Maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex (gender)
  - Sexual orientation
- 3.4 The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out those rights in the UK which are protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. Human rights are based on the core principles that are relevant to day to day life, and protect freedom to control one's own life and fulfill one's potential through: being safe and protected from harm, being treated fairly and with dignity, living the life you choose, and taking an active part in the community and wider society.

### **4. Leadership on Equality and Diversity**

- 4.1 The Governing Body and the Executive Headteacher have responsibility for developing a culture that promotes equality and values diversity. They must also ensure that our schools comply with all relevant equalities legislation and they will seek to challenge any prejudice, discriminatory behaviour and attitudes.
- 4.2 The Executive Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The School requires that its employees and volunteers have appropriate training and possess competencies to fulfill the principles of this protocol. The training and competence levels will depend on the role of the employee or volunteer. Some roles will require specific training, competencies and conduct. Induction and in service training will ensure that employees and volunteers acquire appropriate levels of competence.

## 5.2 **Managers and supervisors**

Senior leaders have responsibility for embedding equality objectives in plans and strategies. School leadership is responsible for ensuring that fair employment decisions are made including:

- promoting a representative workforce, for example; fair recruitment, career development, pay, training, promotion and welfare of staff to ensure that the Federation's workforce, as far as reasonable, reflects the make-up of the local population and the school community.
- ensuring staff are competent in equality and diversity, through regular one-to-one meetings, supervision and appraisals.
- challenging unfairness, and acting promptly and fairly in any instances of actual or alleged discrimination, harassment, or victimisation, in areas for which they are responsible;
- consulting and engaging with all employees on key employment related decisions, such as restructures or changes to work practices.
- supporting staff with disabilities, as far as reasonable, by putting in place reasonable adjustments, to overcome barriers they may experience during their employment with our schools.

## 5.3 **Employees and Volunteers**

All school employees and volunteers have a duty to demonstrate the principles and values of this protocol in their interactions and relationships with colleagues, with our children, parents/carers, and others who visit or come into contact with our schools . This includes, but is not limited to:

- acting in ways that are in accordance with equality legislation, policies, protocols and good practices
- treating everyone with whom they come into contact with dignity and respect
- ensuring that they do not discriminate or induce others to practice discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- recognising and reporting behaviour that undermines equality and diversity.

## 6. **Monitoring of the Equal Opportunities Policy**

Effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Executive Headteacher and by the Governing Body including any nominated equal opportunities governor. Disproportionate or negative outcomes will be monitored and actions will be put in place by the Governing Body.

## 7. **Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy**

Breaches of the equalities policy may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct under the School's Disciplinary policy. Schools are strongly advised to seek assistance from Human Resources in such cases.