



Loreto College Single Equality Scheme

Introduction

Loreto College is part of the 5-19 continuum of Catholic education in Manchester and it exists to respond to the educational needs of young people from its partnership high schools and special schools in Manchester and surrounding areas. Its primary purpose is to guide these learners to success by challenging them to achieve academic and human excellence and by supporting them in the pursuit of this excellence. In addition it will be proactive in identifying and responding to the needs of other learners from the Catholic, local and wider communities when they are consonant with the college's core values.

Context

Loreto College Manchester is part of an international network of Catholic colleges run by the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a religious order founded in the seventeenth century by the Englishwoman Mary Ward. It has provided education in Manchester since 1851 and was established as a sixth form college in 1977 as part of the re-organisation of Catholic secondary education in the city. In April 1993 it became a designated college under the Further Education Funding Council (From April 2001 with the Learning & Skills Council). From September 2010 it returned to Manchester City Council.

Aims

It aims to be an educational community which:

- is guided by the teaching of Christ and in turn guides its Catholic young people in their faith journey and provides all its members with the opportunity of living, working and worshipping in a Christian community
- gives expression to the core values of Mary Ward - freedom, justice, sincerity, truth, excellence, internationality and joy - and encourages "seekers of truth and doers of justice" who are able to challenge accepted notions and modes of society
- values all its students as individuals and values all types of learning
- encourages active student involvement in their own learning and lifelong learning
- works in partnership with parents, recognising that our students are their sons and daughters first

- contributes to the educational, religious, cultural and economic well-being of Manchester and its environs. Upon entry to the college, all students have equality of opportunity.

Background

- To set the context, Loreto's student population is drawn from the Manchester LEA, and surrounding authorities including Salford, Trafford, Tameside and Derbyshire.
- Two thirds of Loreto's Partnership High schools are based in Manchester itself.
- In the Government's own measure of deprivation – the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 Manchester ranked 5th most deprived out of 354 local authorities. Manchester is ranked first in terms of the health deprivation and disability measure and seventh most deprived in terms of income deprivation.
- The picture becomes starker when deprivation is reduced to ward level or smaller than this – the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) as designated by the government's measure. Within the 32,482 Super Output Areas, in the IMD 2015, 40.8% of Manchester's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs nationally. Although this is an improvement on the figure from 2010 (45.6%) nevertheless it does still highlight the level of deprivation compared to the wider country.
- There are 98 LSOAs that are consistently in the top 1% most deprived in England in IMDs for 2004, 2007, 2010 and 2015, eight of which are in Manchester. 18 LSOAs in Manchester fall into the relatively most deprived 1% in England. There are 282 LSOAs in Manchester and 115 (40.8% of Manchester) of these are in the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in England. The most deprived LSOA in Manchester is in Harpurhey. This LSOA, along with two others located in Harpurhey and one which straddles Ardwick and Gorton North, fall into the top 100 most deprived LSOAs in England. 139 students attend Loreto from St Peter's High School. The 2015 report also explored the proportion of children who are living with income deprivation.
- The neighbourhood with the highest proportion of children affected by income deprivation (66.2%) is LSOA 5133 (013D) in Ancoats behind Central Retail Park, with two thirds of children living in deprivation. The second highest area in Manchester was around Greame Street in Moss Side with 62%. Parts of Moss Side and Hulme both rank in the top 5% of LSOA's with children affected by income deprivation and one LSOA in Moss Side and one in Hulme both rank in the top 1%. In 2015, in Moss Side 9.4% of households claimed free school meals which was the second highest figure in Manchester behind Harpurhey (9.9%). 40.9% claimed housing benefit and 39% Council Tax benefit (ranking 3rd and 4th in Manchester respectively.)
- In 2016, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation looked at health, pay, and the number of people claiming government aid in every constituency in the country. Constituencies were scored according to a measurement known as the working age poverty risk index - which measures the numbers of people who depend on benefits or income support. Blackley and

Broughton, Rochdale and Bolton South East were among the top ten most-deprived areas in the north west of England. Two schools are located close to here, Our Lady's and St. Matthews from which Loreto currently has 171 students. 11 Greater Manchester constituencies were in the top 30 list, also including Manchester Gorton, Wythenshawe, Worseley, and Heywood. Loreto draws a great number of students from schools in this area including St. Paul's (Wythenshawe – 107 students), St.Peter's (bordering Gorton – 139 students), St.Ambrose Barlow and Walkden (Worsley – 161 students).

Purpose of the Single Equality Scheme

At Loreto , we recognise the need for a single coherent equality scheme which will ensure that consistency is maintained in the monitoring and promotion of all elements of equality and diversity with the aim of working to:

- ensure equality of access and resources for all regardless of, for instance, gender, ethnic or national origin, physical, sensory or learning abilities, age, socio-economic status, religion, politics, sexuality, responsibility for dependents.
- provide an environment where every individual is recognized and valued so that racial, disability and sexual equality is promoted and individuals are free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any kind.
- manage policies, procedures and environment in ways that will seek to maintain every individual's dignity and rights.
- educate all our members for life and work in a multi cultural society
- monitor and evaluate equality of opportunity
- comply with all current equalities and data protection legislation

Access to and Participation in Education at Loreto.

Access to Qualifications

- The college will ensure that admission to its programmes of study will reflect the criteria as laid down in the introduction to this policy. Admission to courses is available to students who are able to achieve the required standard in their respective programme.
- Particular help and attention will be given to those who find access to education difficult.
- The spectrum of courses will, as far as is possible, reflect the needs of students, the local community and national requirements
- New students will each be given a diary, personal tutor and an induction in their chosen programme of study.

Access to Learning

- The College will maintain a learning environment in which all students feel at ease and in which guidance, counselling and induction will be given without any form of discrimination.
- The College provides a barrier-free environment to student learning.
- The College will also ensure that the curriculum, its delivery and resources will be planned to maintain equality of opportunity for all its students. These will be free of any discriminatory assumptions, images, language and/or stereotyping
- The College Equal Opportunities Policy will be distributed to all providers of work experience. On placements, supervising staff will ensure that the students have not been made subject to any discriminatory assumptions or practices.
- On admission, students will receive individual counselling in order to ensure that due accreditation is given for prior learning or attainments as relevant to their particular programme of study.
- The College will provide appropriate special and flexible patterns of study to meet the needs of students - the use of which will be monitored by the students' teacher throughout the programme. Further materials will be progressively purchased and developed as required.
- Appropriate learning support will be provided for students according to individual needs as required and as funding allows.

Equality Duties – Legal Responsibility

Race Equality

Under the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), the College has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful race discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

It also has specific duties to:

- Prepare and maintain a written race equality policy

- Assess the impact of its policies on students and staff from different racial groups
- Monitor the admission and progress of students and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups. Set out the College's arrangements for publishing the results for assessments and monitoring
- Where reasonably practicable publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring.

We will seek to ensure that:

- Governors, staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of our racial equality policy and the action needed for its implementation
- Staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policy. Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information, which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the policy.

We will also ensure the College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority racial groups.

Our Commitment

- The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its student body and workforce by individuals, and believes that the College will benefit from engaging staff from a variety of racial, ethnic and national backgrounds, thus allowing it to meet the needs of a diverse student population within a multi-cultural society. The College will treat all employees and students with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- The College will seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations between members of different racial groups. To this end, the College undertakes to provide training and support for staff, to consult with staff about their experience of the working environment, and to provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos where issues of racism, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly, with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination, to respecting diversity and difference, and to encourage good relations between people of different groups.

- The College will work towards the elimination of racism whether direct or indirect, and will seek to ensure that individuals and communities have, as far as is possible, equal access to learning programmes and facilities.

Action already undertaken:

- Achievement, retention, success and destination data has been reviewed for a significant number of years. Action has been taken during this time to address any concerns, for example the appointment at one stage of a Social Inclusion Officer to help underachieving boys.
- Marketing materials are regularly reviewed and present a positive image of all ethnic groups as members of the college community.
- All teachers are instructed to review teaching materials to ensure that there are no stereotypical images contained within these.
- Tutorial materials address the Race Equality Policy and highlight the importance of educating the student body on issues such as asylum seekers, general immigration etc.
- Equal opportunities themes related to racial equality are actively promoted, for example the celebration of Black History month.
- Historically this has been a focus of Inset activities for some years. Themes focused on have included:
 - (a) The Race Relations act and its requirements.
 - (b) The underachievement of black males in secondary education and its impact upon Loreto.
 - (c) The achievements of differing ethnic groups at Loreto and any causes for concern.

Disability Equality

The National Background

- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 (and subsequent amendments effective from October 2004) and the DDA 2005 have brought in measures to prevent discrimination against disabled people in employment and services.
- The Special Educational Needs Act 2001 (SENDA) amended the DDA 1995 to cover education and has been further amended, effective from 1 September

2006, under the DDA 1995 (Amendment) Act (Further and Higher Education) Regulations 2006.

- Discrimination against disabled people can take place by treating them 'less favourably' than other people and by failing to make a 'reasonable adjustment' where they are placed at a 'substantial disadvantage' compared with other people for a reason relating to their disability.
- The DDA introduced a wide definition of a disabled person as having a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day duties.

The DDA 2005 introduced a new disability equality duty for the public sector, effective from December 2006, to promote disability equality across all functions. This means that we need to ensure that we continue to build disability equality into everything that we do. The general duty requires that every public authority shall in carrying out its functions have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where this means treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons (this principle has always been recognised in the DDA, particularly through the duty to make reasonable adjustments, and, for example, in the provision of dedicated services to enable disabled persons to access mainstream activities on equitable terms).

Under the specific duties, there was a requirement to publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4 December 2006 as a means of delivering the equality duty, and to involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme. The College's Disability Equality Scheme has been developed in line with the requirements of this disability legislation.

Current Strengths and Issues to address.

Loreto Sixth Form College has a tradition of positively responding to issues of disability:

- The current buildings are all barrier free which has meant that the college can respond more positively to applications from students with physical disabilities.
- Disabled students have been members of the college equality group and have been interviewed for their qualitative feelings about the college and the provision made.
- The Disability Equality scheme has been rigorously followed by the Equality Group and core points have now been implemented. For example, the provision of material on disabled students/students with learning difficulties is given to all staff who teach the students concerned.
- Inset activities have focussed on provision for disabled students. In 2012, for example the Inset examined the required provision for a blind student. At the conclusion of his course, Inset focussed on lessons to be learnt for future students who were visually disabled.
- Loreto Sixth Form College has outstanding social and educational inclusion according to the most recent OFSTED report published May 2010 where it achieved a grade 1.

Gender Equality

The Equality Act 2006 created the Gender Equality Duty for the public sector. The Gender Equality Duty has two parts to it, the “general” duty and the “specific” duty. The general duty places a legal duty on Loreto College:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

To help meet its general duty, the College, like most other public bodies covered by the duty, has a specific duty to:

- Produce a Gender Equality Scheme identifying its gender equality goals and actions to meet them, in consultation with employers and stakeholders
- Monitor and review progress
- Review the Scheme every three years
- Develop, publish and regularly review an equal pay policy, including measures to address promotion, development and occupational segregation
- Conduct and publish gender impact assessments of all major policy developments, and publish its criteria for conducting such impact assessments

Our Commitment and Priorities.

The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its student body and workforce by individuals, and believes that the College will benefit from engaging staff from both genders. The College will treat all employees and students with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from sexism, harassment or victimisation.

The College will seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations. To this end, the College undertakes to provide training and support for staff, to consult with staff about their experience of the working environment, and to provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos where issues of sexism, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly, with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing sexism and discrimination, to respecting diversity, and to encourage good relations.

The College will work towards the elimination of sexism whether direct or indirect, and will seek to ensure that individuals and communities have, as far as is possible, equal access to learning programmes and facilities.

Current strengths

- The college has reviewed gender issues by achievement, retention, success & destination for a significant number of years. Staff have been informed of related patterns through inset and suggestions made for innovations in teaching to address these patterns.
- Inset activity for staff has often focused on the 'Gender Gap' at level 3 (November 2014). Suggestions have been made in terms of class activities to keep the male engaged.
- Staffing is annually recorded for a gender breakdown by different levels.

General provision

The college already operates a number of related policies including:

- The Staff Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The Student Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Harassment Policy.
- The College Code of Respect
- The Disability Equality Scheme

- The Race Equality Policy & action plan
- The Gender equality scheme
- Work Life Balance Policy.

It also operates a number of related Charters and Procedures including:

- A Student Charter
- Procedures for maternity leave and pay.
- Procedures of Paternity leave.
- A Staff Handbook detailing policies and procedures.
- 'Gender/ethnicity/disability free' marketing materials.

The college regularly monitors achievement, retention and destinations for ethnic & gender – related patterns (as part of the self assessment process) and acts on any perceived issues. In the most recent Equal Opportunities Self Assessment Report, it was pointed out that there were no related issues within these areas.

The 2010 Equality Act

Homophobic, Transphobic and Biphobic bullying.

The 2010 law covered the same groups that were protected by existing equality laws – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and also added:

- Increasing protection to transsexual people who no longer have to be under medical supervision to be protected from discrimination and harassment;
- Protecting people from discrimination because they are associated with a transsexual person or because they are wrongly believed to a transsexual.

Loreto's answer to tackling homophobic biphobic and transphobic bullying in addition to programmes within its current safeguarding programme was to have an additional focus in **the Respect Week of 2014** in which tutorial materials, assembly materials, posters all focussed on these themes and a number of speakers from a variety of groups including the Albert Kennedy Trust and Lesbian and Gay Foundation were invited into college. This not only helped to raise the issue with students and to train them on how to respond if they experience or see any bullying but it also offered individual support through private discussions with speakers from these groups at lunchtime. This will be repeated.

Dealing with Complaints

The College's Complaints Policy details the steps to be taken when dealing with all equality – related issues. It stresses that:

- All staff have a responsibility, on receiving informal or formal complaints, to treat them seriously and to deal with them promptly.
- The Principal will receive all formal complaints, record their receipt and pass them on to the appropriate Manager.
- Managers who receive formal complaints will investigate them promptly and respond in writing within ten working days to the complainant, keep records and send a copy of the correspondence to the Principal.
- If the formal complaint relates to the performance or actions of particular members of staff, the line manager of the staff concerned will be asked to investigate the matter and deal with it.
- Senior Managers will be asked to deal directly with more serious formal complaints.
- The Principal or an appointed deputy will be involved in any appeals against decisions made.
- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the Complaints Policy & Procedure are operating effectively. The Principal will present to the Governing Body the annual summary and analysis of the range of formal complaints.
- Governors will also be involved in appeal against decisions made in response to complaints.
- Any complaints that involve the Principal or Assistant Principals will be investigated and dealt with by the Governing Body.

Impact Assessment methodology

The College will introduce a process for assessing the impact (or likely impact) of its policies, practices and actions on race, disability, high widening participation and gender equality. These 'impact assessments' will seek to ensure that:

- the College's activities do not inadvertently disadvantage students, employees, or service users, and
- opportunities to further promote equality and diversity are identified.

The impact of new policies and practices will be assessed during their development. Existing policies and practices will be prioritised for assessment according to their relevance to gender equality. A timetable for completing these assessments over a three year period will be drawn up. In most cases, the College will seek to involve an appropriate variety of people in the process of conducting 'impact assessments'.

What are Impact Assessments?

An Impact Assessment is a way of deciding whether an existing or proposed policy, procedure, practice or service does (or may) affect people differently, and if so, whether it affects them in an adverse way.

We recognise that carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment on our policies will assist us in ensuring College activities do not have an adverse impact on specific groups or limit our opportunity to promote equality of opportunity.

The approach we have adopted will assist us in achieving our responsibilities under the RRAA 2000, DDA 2005 and Equality Act 2006.

Assessments will be carried out on new policies and services, as they are developed.

Involving people

It is recognised that the involvement of a variety of people is critical to the success of equality schemes. Employees and their representatives have been consulted on the development of the College's schemes through the Equality Group; Disabled staff and students have contributed directly through comments made in the Equality Group and feedback has been obtained from local Special Schools.

This Single Equality Scheme arises from the work of the College's Equality Group that meets regularly and includes staff and students, men and women, disabled people, and people from ethnic minorities within its membership.

Some of the groups we have worked with include the Disability Team at Manchester University, Manchester City Council Social Services Adult Social care team, a variety of local high schools.

Roles and Responsibilities

The college Equality Group reviews the CDP and SAR, ensuring that all actions are undertaken. The Equality Group consists of a Vice Principal, the college Premises manager, Personnel Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer, member of staff responsible for Learning Support, Head of Department for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, Head of Learning services, LDD staff, other interested staff and students.

The Equal Opportunities Officer produces the CDP and SAR. He also chairs the group.