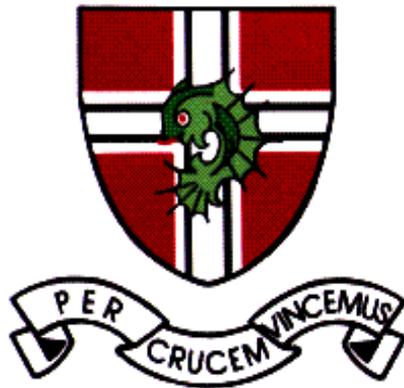


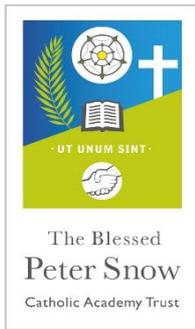
St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy



Cohesion Policy

Approved: November 2017
Review date: November 2018

The Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust



The Catholic Voluntary Academies which form the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust are distinctive as we provide grounding in the Catholic Faith for all our children. The special character of our Catholic academies is the quality of the religious teaching, integrated into the overall education of our children. Our beliefs, which are Gospel centred, affect the way we live, making our academies living examples of Christ and His teachings.

"Education is not and must never be considered as purely utilitarian. It is about forming the human person, equipping him or her to live life to the full – in short it is about imparting wisdom. And true wisdom is inseparable from knowledge of the Creator." (Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Teachers and Religious, Twickenham, September 2010).

Our Academies therefore operate and are informed by the following four key principles of Christian formation:

- **Places of Discipleship**
- **Places where Communities are created**
- **Places of Learning**
- **Places where we treasure God's World**

In light of the above principles, the Trust aims to:

- ensure secure, welcoming and engaging environments in which all individuals learn to value and respect both themselves and others
- provide all individuals with the opportunities to achieve excellence, to develop their full potential as human beings and to encourage and challenge them to do so
- uphold the unshakable belief in the unique potential of each child, student and member of staff
- provide a curriculum that initiates students into the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills they need to become mature Christian adults in their personal, social, family and working lives.

Vision for the Curriculum

Catholic schools are called by the Church to play their part in glorifying God and making Christ known. St Irenaeus taught that God is glorified by human beings who are fully alive and this is recognised by the mission statement of our school, which speaks of “developing our full potential in the image of Christ”.

This is relevant to every aspect of the life of our school, but it has particular bearing on the curriculum - that is, the whole range of planned activities, within and without the classroom, which give pupils opportunities to learn. We believe that the Catholic nature of our school should infuse every aspect of our curriculum, and not just be constructed around it.

Mission Outcomes

The Academy Council has clearly stated its aims for the school, and these indicate the outcomes that we desire for the pupils who come to learn at St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy.

We aim to produce young men and women who know and love God, and appreciate the wonder and beauty of His creation. Through studying at our school, they will have grown in self-esteem and have the understanding they need to help them live the Catholic faith. Through the opportunities provided to develop their intellectual and physical potential, they will have discovered new things about themselves and be equipped to go on learning throughout their lives. They will be responsible adults, able both to serve others and to contribute to society in a thoughtful and reflective manner. In particular, they will be well prepared to take their place in a multi-cultural and technological world that is rapidly developing, yet work for the common good of all people using those virtues that never change.

Introduction

The Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust sets out in its Mission Statement a distinctive view about the education to be provided by its member academies. Quoting Pope Emeritus Benedict XIV, it describes that education as “... about forming the human person, equipping him or her to live life to the full – in short it is about imparting wisdom.”

Part of that formation and equipping is to help each student to develop the personal attributes and moral framework that will enable them to live lovingly, justly, peacefully and truthfully in a fragmented world. In spite of the significant progress in international and intra-national relations in recent decades, new barriers between peoples are constantly being erected.

Centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who “breaks down dividing walls of hostility” (Ephesians 2:14), a key element of the mission of St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy, both as an organisation and in the education it provides its students, is to promote social cohesion. By doing this, it will not only address the vision of the Blessed Peter Snow Academy, but also obey the social teaching of the Catholic Church.

The Trust’s Mission Statement calls for its member academies to be:

- places of discipleship
- places where communities are being created
- places of learning, and
- places where God’s world is treasured

This policy will indicate briefly how social cohesion will be promoted under each of these headings.

A place of discipleship

St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy, with its Sixth Form, was founded to provide a faith-based education for the Catholics of the Heavy Woollen District. It is heavily oversubscribed, and has a high proportion of baptised Catholic students. In recent years the academy demographic has become more representative of the local community, with an increasing number of students from other faiths, particularly in the Sixth Form.

While these students are most welcome, and make a valuable contribution to the life of the academy, they join our community on the clear understanding that the person of Jesus Christ is at the centre of all that is done within it. The academy has a structured programme of spiritual formation which seeks to challenge students to think about the Good News proclaimed in the scriptures and in the teaching of the Church, with the desire that they might become intentional disciples.

Love, and the service of others, is the hallmark of that discipleship, and therefore it is the desire of the Academy Council that a key element of all spiritual formation should be the promotion of social cohesion.

A place where community is created

If the academy's desire is to encourage students to live lives of discipleship which, among other things, promote social cohesion, then a key factor in that encouragement will be the experience of community cohesion modelled by the academy itself.

Thus, as part of the impact assessment that the academy carries out on all new enterprises, the Academy Council and Senior Leadership will ask themselves whether social cohesion is being fostered in line with the teaching of the Church. In particular, the key elements of Catholic social teaching – Solidarity, Service, Subsidiarity and Justice – will be explicitly modelled and fostered.

The benefits of **solidarity** and mutual cooperation will be promoted through the pastoral and spiritual curriculum. As the Blessed Peter Snow Mission Statement says, *"We hope to be distinguished by the quality of care, concern, support and reconciliation that we extend to all as we strive always to create and uphold a truly Christian Community; whilst also recognising the values and contributions made by other faiths."*

Students will be taught the power of **service** to break down barriers, and academy staff will see service as a key element of their individual leadership roles, modelling to the students the equality and dignity of all.

Subsidiarity recognises and affirms difference at various scales, and thus such differences as do exist between groups of students will be respected and celebrated – causes of rejoicing rather than causes of tension.

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, spoke of the ideal society being "Founded on **Justice**, built on Truth, and animated by Love." Thus Academy Mission Committee

discrimination against any group or individual, for whatever reason, will not be tolerated within the academy. Further, students will be given training in applying the principles of justice, truth and love in their everyday dealings with one another.

It is further recognised that the academy has a duty not only to create a cohesive community within its own walls, but also within its locality; and, so far as it is able, in the wider world. In ways which complement its academic and pastoral work, the academy will seek to engage with other local groups which have a desire to build community and seek the common good.

A place of learning

The academic curriculum of the academy will provide opportunities for students to overcome that ignorance of the unfamiliar which is so often at the heart of social division. Local visits and guest speakers will, as appropriate, supplement programmes of study which are designed to promote cohesion.

Students will learn to value, through the RE and PSHCE curriculum, and through the Programme of Spiritual Formation, the dignity of each individual. They will also learn that it is in Christ, who transcends any human divisions, that humanity finds its true calling.

Through the whole curriculum, in its widest sense, they will learn those skills of team work, trust and communication that are the building blocks of a cohesive society.

A place where God's world is treasured

The 21st century promises to be a challenging one for the human race. As the global population increases, and as climates change, there will be new and unforeseen pressures on scarce resources. A world where nations tried to work together now seems to be splintering into smaller states. As the often value-free hedonism of the last century is challenged by the emergence of ever more extreme political and religious views, the need for the promotion of a social cohesion that is built on solid foundations has never been more relevant.

Catholic social teaching reminds us of our responsibilities, as well as our innate rights. St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy will, by its teaching and formation of its students, and by the example of its staff and leadership, and by the witness of the whole community, promote a society where peace and justice can flourish, in a world – God's world – which is truly treasured.

School	St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy
Date	1st November 2017
Lead member of staff	Miss Sarah Wilkinson (Deputy Headteacher)
Other involved staff/role	Mrs Clare Kernan (Assistant Headteacher Pastoral Welfare) Miss Mary Mollicone (Head of RE) Miss Beatrice Maggiore (Leader of Learning PSHCE)

Proposed Plan

Background/ how this proposal has come about

Reason for proposal – to introduce new practice/provision

to change or reduce practice/provision

to remove practice/provision

Main stakeholders

Any legislation or guidance that informs the proposals

Review and update of current policy.

Is the proposal likely to have an adverse impact on compliance with the Equality Duty?

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

N

Promoting equality of opportunity

N

Fostering good relations

N

Please explain

Consultation Process

With whom do you plan to consult?

How?

Where is the evidence of the consultation?

Staff / Governors

Potential Issues

Characteristic	Impact of proposal (specify if impact is to pupil, parent/carer, staff, governor, other)	Positive Negative Neutral	Can barrier be removed? Y/N
Disability	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Race	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Sex	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Gender reassignment	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Pregnancy, maternity	None	Neutral	
Religion/belief	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Sexual orientation	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	
Marriage, civil partnership	None	Neutral	
Age	Improvement of pupil cohesion	Positive	

The aim of the policy is to make school, and society, more tolerant and cohesive.

Explain in more detail