

Salt and Light Papers provide important information and analysis to help Christians and Churches to engage with 21st century social issues

FA9

TEACHERS WILL NOT HAVE TO VALUE DIVERSITY

Teachers will not be required to 'value diversity' under the code of conduct published in July 2009 by the General Teaching Council for England.

For its public Consultation, which closed in February 2009, the GTC produced a draft version of the code suggesting that teachers should 'promote equality and value diversity in all their professional relationships and interactions.' In the final version of the code, which will become an obligatory standard from October 2009 for all registered teachers, this sentence has been removed altogether.

The importance of the changes is best understood by comparing the draft and final versions of the code.

DRAFT VERSION

4 Promote equality and value diversity

- Act respectfully towards all children and young people, parents, carers and colleagues, regardless of their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or beliefs
- Take responsibility for understanding and acting on their obligations under legislation and school policies relating to equality and diversity, bullying and inclusion and access, seeking clarification if necessary
- Proactively challenge discrimination, stereotyping and bullying, no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator; promote equality and value diversity in all their professional relationships and interactions
- Contribute to the creation of a fair and inclusive school environment by taking steps to improve the wellbeing, development and progress of those with special needs, or whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement
- Help children and young people to understand and appreciate different views, perspectives and experiences and develop positive relationships both within school and in the local community

- Are sensitive to the socio-economic and cultural context in which they are working and issues in the local community that may impact on the wellbeing, development and progress of children and young people

FINAL VERSION

4 Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality

- Act appropriately towards all children and young people, parents, carers and colleagues, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief
- Take responsibility for understanding and complying with school policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion, access and bullying
- Address unlawful discrimination, bullying and stereotyping no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator
- Help create a fair and inclusive school environment by taking steps to improve the wellbeing, development and progress of those with special needs, or whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement
- Help children and young people to understand different views, perspectives and experiences and develop positive relationships both within school and in the local community

The extent of the changes in the final version shows how worthwhile it was that teachers, parents and other individuals and organisations took the trouble to respond to the Consultation.

Rod Badams

The above was published in The Bulletin [July 2009] under the heading Teachers spared having to 'value diversity.'

Salt and Light Papers is a series of occasional papers on contemporary issues of social concern. It is published online by the Affinity Social Issues Team. Its purpose is to help Christians to think through questions of relevance to our place in the world around us. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily endorsed by the Affinity Social Issues Team.