

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School



Equalities Policy

January 2024

Review: January 2026

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on biannual basis.
The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in January 2024

It is due for review in January 2026.

Hayley Francis
Head Teacher

Date: January 2024

Mrs Lindsay Wise
Chair of Governors

Date: January 2024

Introduction

This equalities policy is an attempt to amalgamate all the equalities legislation into one single equality policy for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

Statement/Principles

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of access and the diversity within the school community is celebrated and valued.

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010).

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'

- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Relationships Education Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- Admissions Policy
- LAC Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'.

The school fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.

Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The responsible body for the school is the governing body.

The school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of

references on former pupils or access to “old pupils” communications and activities.

The school will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

General duty

Public bodies including schools and settings have a general duty to have due regard when making decisions and developing policies, to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Specific duty

To help schools and maintained EYFS settings in England meet the general equality duty, there are two specific duties that they are required to carry out. These are:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.

Monitoring and Review

The staff member responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation is Hayley Francis (Headteacher). In her absence this role is taken up by the Assistant Headteacher or a member of the leadership team. She will be responsible for:

Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school’s responsibilities in this regard;

Working closely with the governing body.

Supporting positively the evaluation activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on pupils from different groups, e.g. SEND, Children in Care, Minority Ethnic including EAL pupils and Free School Meals, in the following recommended areas:

- Pupils’ progress and attainment
- Learning and teaching
- Behaviour discipline and exclusions
- Attendance
- Admissions
- Incidents of prejudice related bullying and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities

- Staff recruitment and retention
- Visits and visitors

Inclusion at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School maintains an inclusive approach to education and we aim to provide equality of opportunity for all children. All children are valued, respected and welcomed to the school whatever their additional educational need.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

The school has a policy for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and follows the Code of Practice. When appropriate, referrals are made to specialist learning services and medical services. Any referral to an outside agency is undertaken with parental consent. Further details can be found in our SEND Local Offer and SEN policy.

The staff work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils and liaise with external agencies to build upon pupil's strengths and develop the individual.

We promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school.

We are committed to ensuring that disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum, school trips and take an active role in all extra-curricular activities. There is a designated disabled toilet. Our Accessibility Policy and Plan details facilities and future projects.

Equalities and Diversity

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we aim to create an inclusive culture for all staff, pupils, families and visitors to the school. We recognise respect and value people's differences and ensure that individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs, including areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. We promote equality and diversity treating all staff and students fairly ensuring equal access to opportunities to enable children and staff to fully participate in the learning process and achieve and equip children and staff with the skills to challenge inequality and discrimination.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We celebrate the fact that many of our children speak more than one language. We carefully monitor and track the progress of pupils with EAL to ensure they are not disadvantaged and recognise that they may require additional support to acquire the same competence in English as in their home language(s). This support is provided in class through carefully differentiated work and, where appropriate, through the additional support and specific teaching with a teaching assistant.

Children who are learning English as an additional language have skills and knowledge about language similar to monolingual English-speaking

children. Their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English. We fully appreciate the necessity of a child retaining their first language and bonuses it brings.

At St Joseph's teachers take action to help children who are learning English as an additional language by various means such as accessing interpreters for assessment if indicated ensuring that new vocabulary is repeated many times in different contexts through games, songs, photos, experiences and is re-visited; displaying key vocabulary and using visual prompts immersing the child in a language rich environment and ensuring that talking is used to support writing;

encouraging children to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another; ensuring staff are aware of expected 'norms' for acquisition of a second language and contributory factors for each child ensuring standardised assessments are used cautiously due to cultural differences

Children in Need/ Looked After Children

We will provide a safe learning environment for Looked after Pupils ensuring that their individual needs are met by maintaining good communication with those caring for the child, social services and support services. We commit to attending review meetings and ensuring the targets set on Education Support Plans are integrated into school life.

More Able Pupils

We are committed to providing an environment which encourages all pupils, including more able pupils to pursue a high level of performance in academic and non-academic areas.

We aim to encourage pupils to be independent learners, provide challenging work at an appropriate level and provide opportunities for pupils to work with like-minded peers both within school and the wider community.

Provision for pupils is through quality first teaching, effective, adaptive teaching and high challenge in the classroom, teacher expectation of pupil performance and additional learning in interventions

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious
- backgrounds both women and men, and girls and boys.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds both women and men, girls and boys

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7), in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them

Policy Commitments

Promoting Equality: Curriculum

- We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic. To achieve this, we will ensure:
- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs;
- The use of images and materials which positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

Promoting Equality: Achievement

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.
- All pupils are actively encouraged to engage fully pupils in their own learning.

Promoting Equality: The ethos and culture of the school

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;

We strive to achieve a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school;

- The school will promote race equality and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.
- The school will promote disability equality, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with: pupils' progress, attainment and achievement

pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being teaching styles and strategies

admissions and attendance

staff recruitment, retention and professional development care, guidance and support

behaviour, discipline and exclusions

working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
working with the wider community.

- The school will promote gender equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.
- Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.
- The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around the school reflect diversity across all aspects of equality and are frequently monitored;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities (this not only includes physical access, but takes account wider access to school information and activities)
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and off-site activities;

- Pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice for example, through the School Council, pupil perception surveys, the teaching and learning committee and there are regular opportunities to engage with pupils about their learning and the life of the school;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included.

Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school;
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;
- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of the equalities policy and practice;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review

Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents;
- The school reports to Governors, parents and LA on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school;
- Maintain good channels of communication to ensure parents' views are captured to inform practice;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. EAL or pupils with disabilities are made to feel welcome.

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equalities.

The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's equalities policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality schemes are easily identifiable (these may be included within the School Development Plan, the school's Accessibility Plan or may be stand-alone documents);
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The designated Equalities Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to these incidents.
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.
- Ensure that the school's Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the governing board.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership team have responsibility for:

- In partnership with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and schemes;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the equalities policy;
- Taking appropriate action in response to any prejudice-related incidents.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

All school staff have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other groups vulnerable to discrimination.
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the class teacher or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

Measuring the Impact of this Policy

The equalities policy and all other relevant policies will be evaluated and monitored for their equality impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the

different groups that make up our school. This will be communicated with staff, parents, carers and governors by the Head Teacher.

Date: January 2024

Review date: January 2026