

St Joseph's Catholic School Equality Policy



Mission Statement

At St Joseph's we welcome all as members of our school family.
We learn and care for each other as brothers and sisters; enriched by the teachings of Jesus.

We encourage Creativity; valuing our unique talents and skills as gifts from God.
Working alongside pupils and Parents/carers, we can all succeed and realise great things.

Serving the communities within the Parish of St Joseph's and St John the Baptist and beyond, we reach out to all.

We respect each other, our different cultures and faiths; celebrating our richness and diversity.

Through worship and prayer we show our love; striving to achieve our very best.

*Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of what their relationship is).

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for St Joseph's Catholic School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. At St Joseph's we believe that every pupil has an entitlement to develop their talents. Educational experiences are provided which develop pupils' achievements and recognise their individuality. Diversity is valued as a rich resource, which supports the learning of all. In this school, inclusion recognises a child's right to a broad, balanced, relevant and challenging curriculum, which is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents, and personal qualities. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

Our equality policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents*, visitors and partner agencies - who we will engage with and who will be invited to actively contribute to its development.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we are promoting inclusive participatory practice, meeting the needs of and ensuring that those in our community requiring extra support receive it. As well as promoting understanding between people from different groups.

Our school within the wider context

St Joseph's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those who speak English as an additional language, is much higher than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). More pupils than usual join or leave the school other than at the normal admission times. KS2 pupils are taught in single-age classes, with one class in each year group, we currently have vertical grouping in EY/KS1 due to low pupil numbers. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium, which is additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is higher than normally found.

Definition of inclusion

Inclusion is an ongoing process that celebrates diversity and involves the identification and minimising of barriers to learning and participation that might be experienced by any pupils, irrespective of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, language and social background, and the maximising of resources to reduce these barriers.

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To help pupils develop their personalities, skills, abilities and spiritual well being.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Our vision for Equality

At St Joseph's we seek to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence. We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same. We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling and grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum including school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents*, pupils and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team (SLT) is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Governing Body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are part of the School Development Plan (SDP)
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the scheme
- evaluate and review this scheme every two years

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the SDP

Our pupils will:

- be involved in the development of the policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the policy
- be encouraged to actively support the policy

Our parents* will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the policy
- have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

How we will develop our Policy - Engagement and Involvement

The development of this scheme will involve the whole of our school community. We will engage with them and listen to what they have to say including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities and taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010.

Our pupils will be given opportunities to contribute to the policy through:

- The School Council
- Pupil Voice
- The EPR curriculum

Our staff will be given opportunities to contribute to the policy through:

- Staff meetings

- INSET

Our governors will be given opportunities to contribute to the policy through:

- INSET
- Dedicated agenda items at FGB meetings

Parents* will be given opportunities to contribute to the policy through:

- The school website
- Newsletters
- Parent consultation meetings
- Parent Groups
- Questionnaires

Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups will be given opportunities to contribute to the policy through:

- Pupil voice
- Questionnaires

What have we done so far?

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.

We evaluate our single plan each term which means we evaluate our priorities for whole school development and plan for next steps.

We hold termly Pathway meetings, which means we are constantly monitoring the make-up and needs of our staff and pupils/students – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We work with the other agencies such as Counselling, Home School Liaison, Children's Services and EMAS to ensure that we support our pupils and their families.

We seek to establish good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required. We have strengthened links with the parish and the parish priest.

Commissioned services (buying in services)

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We interpret our duties positively, take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment. Our staff team will undertake training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.

We will ensure that we have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

Responding to equality-related incidents

We recognise that prejudice-based harassment or bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, ageism or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all incidents that are motivated by **racism** and report to the Local Authority as requested. We and the County Council will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities. We ensure that our policies comply with LA guidance and protocol.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing.

This policy was published on [xxxxxxxxxx] It will be actively promoted and disseminated through publication on our school website, newsletters and discussions with pupils and parents.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these within the detailed action plan.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community.

Objectives

Using the engagement and analysis of the information as outlined above we have developed an action plan that sets specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. See Section 3

Section 3

EQUALITY POLICY OBJECTIVES: ACTION PLAN February 2018

Aim: To develop in pupils a sense of their own self worth and uniqueness as created by God.

Protected characteristic and link to equality duty:	Aim:	Outcome:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from	Milestone/ progress:
All	To ensure that all stakeholders are supported in terms of health and wellbeing	All staff aware of the equality scheme and objectives; and are aware of their own responsibilities in this regard.	All stakeholders	Raise awareness of the support in place for all stakeholders- Staff- review of staff attendance and leave of absence procedures. Staff questionnaires and regular staff meeting. to give staff a voice. Support for families: Open door policy Sign post to services and parent support groups.	Pippa Davies Liz Messenger Vicky Arnold	Jan 18	Ongoing
Ensuring equality of opportunity and participation	To improve attendance in order to improve the learning chances of all our pupils.	Improved attendance, no learning is lost through unauthorised absence	Pupils whose attendance falls below 85%	Procedures in place to track attendance, with monitoring of those considered to be at risk. Liaison with the Home-to School Liaison team.	SLT Attendance Welfare officer (LM) Maggie Baker (consultant)	Jan 18	Half termly
Ensuring equality of opportunity and participation	To increase social and emotional skills for vulnerable pupils	Vulnerable pupils have better self esteem and coping skills in social situations.	Pupils identified as vulnerable.	Referral to the Learning Mentor or the Counselling Service.	Learning Mentor (VA) Inclusion Manager (PD)	Jan 18	Ongoing

Ensuring equality of opportunity and participation	To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability	To ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level; addressing the underperformance of boys	Attainment and progress of boys.	To address the gender gap between boys and girls in terms of attainment and progress by investigating possible reasons and identifying pupils who are at risk of not achieving their targets are given additional support.	Headteacher Pippa Davies	Jan 18	Termly reviews. July 2018
Ensuring equality of opportunity and participation	To help pupils to recognize the barriers to their learning and/or social skills and help them to overcome these.	Pupils, particularly those with additional needs, are motivated to challenge themselves. Ensure that no child is disadvantaged by home circumstance or previous experience.	Pupils with additional needs.	All pupils, but particularly the less able, are encouraged to work independently through access to relevant resources and learning opportunities planned at an appropriate level.	Headteacher Pippa Davies Vicky Arnold Inclusion team	Jan 18	Ongoing- monitor as set out in monitoring map.
Eliminating discrimination	To strengthen race equality and community cohesion work	Staff and pupils will have a better understanding of what it means to be a School of Sanctuary. Improved understanding of their community and the diversity within it.	Whole school community	Work towards the “School of Sanctuary” award in order to Provide learning opportunities around human rights, social justice, diversity and interdependence	Alex Matthews Liz Williams (EMAS)	Jan 18	By the end of the summer term 2018
Fostering good relations	To promote good relations between people from different backgrounds and cultures.	To celebrate and encourage Bilingualism as an advantage for communication in a diverse society.	Pupils with EAL.	Encourage pupils to use their mother tongue; developing their learning through accessing their own language Train pupils as young	Headteacher Liz Williams Alex Matthews Pippa Davies	January 2018	Ongoing into next academic year.

				interpreters and using a buddy system to support new pupils. Work closely with EMAS to ensure that pupils are given the support they need.			
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Appendix A Key legislation

Area	Legislation
All protected characteristics	Equality Act 2010
Age	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Disability	Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Gender	Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006 Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
Race	Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
Religion or belief	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006
Sexual orientation	Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006

Equality Act 2010**Equality Act 2010**

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on ‘protected characteristics’:

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

