

Our Lady Immaculate Equality Scheme & Action Plan 2018-2021

Date: March 2018

Review Date: March 2021

This is a working document which will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Contents:

- **Policy statement**
- **Statutory Requirements**
- **Our School within the Wider Context**
- **Our Vision Statement about Equality**
- **The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community**
- **Our Staff**
- **Implementation, Monitoring and Reviewing**
- **Equality Action Plan 2018-2021**
- **Access Plan 2018-2021**



1. Introduction

This Equality Scheme 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. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

As a Catholic Community we believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God. Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. Our Mission puts God at the centre of all that we do and informs every aspect of school life. We recognise, therefore, that equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community: pupils, staff, parents/carers, governors and the wider community.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture. For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy.

In accordance with our Catholic ethos, our Mission Statement and our aims and objectives we aim to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life
- 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.

We have used the following existing policies and documents to inform our Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan:

- School Improvement Plans
- Positive Attitude to Behaviour and Learning
- Special Educational Needs
- Anti-Bullying

We will assess our current school practices and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to age (as an employer – but not applicable to pupils), disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

2. Statutory requirements

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups. We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff 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 and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation

- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age
- Whatever their language

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we note that reasonable adjustments may need to be made
- Gender (including transgender) – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs
- Religion and belief – we note that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with
- Ethnicity and race – we note that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference
- Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth

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 and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7). These can be found in Appendix 1.

3. Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation. At the start of the Spring Term 2018, at **Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School** there are 9 teaching staff; 6 teaching assistants; 1 admin staff; 1 caretaker, 5 lunchtime welfare staff and 2 kitchen staff - 96% are female – 100% are White British. There are 137 pupils in school and the Gender mix is currently 45% girls; 55% boys of which 95.6% are White British, 2.2% are White other, 1.5% are Traveller of Irish heritage and 0.7% are Black African. English is the main language spoken in school and 1 child has English as an additional language.

There are 2 members of staff with identified disabilities and five pupils with disabilities.

In line with other voluntary aided Faith Schools the Governing Body can exercise discretion in both pupil school admission and staff employment on grounds of faith. As a Catholic primary school with a strong Christian ethos, most of the pupils and staff are baptised Catholics or fellow Christians. However, all pupils, staff and their families are welcome. Because we serve a mainly White British demographic, one of our main priorities is to develop an understanding of ethnicity and cultural and religious diversity within local, national and global contexts.

4. Our vision statement about Equality

Within our school 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.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – disability

The school works with parents/carers, staff and children to identify ways that we can best support pupils, staff and visitors to the school with disabilities. Clear actions are agreed that include ensuring better information is available to people with disabilities.

The school has clear procedures to identify and assess pupils with a disability and work actively with parents/carers and other agencies to plan to best meet their needs.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – gender

The outcomes for both boys and girls are similar in attainment, there is not a huge gap in school. Pupil achievement is monitored and under-achievement addressed through high quality teaching and support. All children are actively encouraged to take part in all activities, regardless of any perceived gender bias.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – race

Very good relationships exist between all members of our community. Pupils' basic skills and levels of respect for others is outstanding and this helps to prepare them for living in a diverse society. The curriculum ensures there is an emphasis placed on helping children to learn about diversity.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – community cohesion

The RE curriculum enables pupils to learn about different faiths and cultural traditions. The school works actively with the local community. The RE and PHSE curriculum enables the teaching of themes related to diversity and the tackling of discrimination. Work is differentiated in order to ensure all pupils are fully included and able to reach their full potential

5. The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Governors as a whole will:

- make sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation;
- monitor progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually.

The Head teacher will:

- draw up, publish and implement the school's equality objectives;
- make sure steps are taken to address the school's stated equality objectives;
- make sure the equality plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents/carers are aware of them;
- produce regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are progressing;

- make sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents;
- enable reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, in regard to students, staff, parents / carers and visitors to the school.

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Scheme
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Scheme
- with the Head Teacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this Scheme

Our pupils will:

- be supported to understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Scheme
- be encouraged to actively support the Scheme

Our parents/carers will:

- have access to the scheme through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Scheme
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Scheme
- be informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child

All staff will:

- promote equality in their work;
- avoid unlawful discrimination against anyone;
- foster good relations between groups;
- deal with prejudice-related incidents and report any concerns;
- be able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- take up training and learning opportunities;
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately. The Head Teacher is responsible overall for monitoring the recording of prejudice-related incidents.

6. Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff from discrimination based on the protected characteristics.

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race
7. Religion
8. Gender
9. Sexual Orientation

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 will make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society, however, ***in line with other voluntary aided Faith Schools the Governing Body can exercise discretion in both pupil school admission and staff employment on grounds of faith.***

In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

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 safe, positive and inclusive environments.

7. Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This Scheme was published in the Spring Term 2018. We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our scheme by:

- Placing it on our website
- Making it available on request
- Making sure it is part of the staff induction handbook and procedures

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Equality Scheme and Equality Objectives. We will report annually on our progress and performance. Our report will be shared with Governors and a summary published on our website. The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Equality Objectives and inform subsequent Equality Schemes.

We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Equality Scheme and Equality Objectives every four years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will involve staff, learners, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of our school community.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

8. Equality Action Plan (Appendix 1)

Using analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. Legislation requires objectives to be reviewed every 4 years.

9. Accessibility Plan (separate document)

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. Schools and Local Authorities have to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them.

Our school's accessibility plans are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving access to the physical environment of the school and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils

Appendix 1 EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2017-2020



Action/Objective	Expected Outcomes	How will impact be monitored	Responsibility	Timescale	Cost
Publish and promote the Equality Scheme through staff meetings, school newsletters and school website	The school and wider communities are aware of and actively working to support our Equality Scheme	Annual Staff and parental questionnaires re: awareness of Equality Scheme and its contents	SLT	After Govs approval of Scheme	none
Continue to identify and monitor racist incidents and report the figures to the Governing Body on a termly basis	Clear systems and procedures in place for the monitoring and addressing of racist incidents	Reduction in reporting of racist incidents and no re-occurrences	SLT	Ongoing	none
Continue to prevent and respond to any hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying	Students feel safer as they know incidents are dealt with effectively	Reduction in hate/bullying incidents and no re-occurrences	SLT	Ongoing	none
Ensure the curriculum, displays and enrichment activities promote role models and heroes that young people positively identify with and ensure these reflect diversity in terms of race, gender and disability	Links with local groups, visitors, enrichment activities and displays all promote positive role model images around school	Monitoring and recording of pupil attitudes and reactions through questionnaires and pupil voice	All staff	Summer Term 2017 onwards	none
Review the Anti-Bullying policy to ensure that all forms of bullying are identified in the policy. Include all stakeholders in the review	Revised Anti-Bullying Policy informed by latest advice	Governors welfare committee	SLT with all staff	Summer Term 2017	staff mtg time
To ensure the content of school meals and the eating environments meet the needs of all race and faith groups and those with specific medical needs	All children able to access school meal provision	Increased take up of school meals	School kitchen staff	Autumn Term 2017 onwards	none
Continue to analyse pupil achievement by race, gender, disability, FSM, LAC and act on trends and patterns that require additional support for pupils	Through data analysis, trends and patterns will be identified and support put in place resulting in a positive impact on achievement and a narrowing of the equality gap	Data analysis of targets, attainment and progress indicators	Head teacher and SLT	Ongoing	SLT time

Create, Monitor and evaluate an accessibility plan	Accessibility for Disabled users of our building will be at the forefront of decisions made and therefore accessibility will be improved	Monitoring of Accessibility Plan	Head Teacher & Governors	Ongoing Review Sep 2018	SLT time
--	--	----------------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	----------