



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Equality Policy

Through our loving God

We follow in the footsteps of St Joseph

Who helps us to be gentle, caring and hardworking.

**As we learn together, we love, value and welcome
everyone.**

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Policy owner: Headteacher

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Purpose and scope

- Purpose: To set out St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's commitment to equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination for pupils, staff, governors and the wider school community in line with our Catholic mission and statutory duties.
- Scope: This policy applies to all pupils (including children in the pre-school and wrap-around care), staff (teaching, support and governors), volunteers, contractors and visitors, and to all activities and services provided by the school, on and off site.
- The policy covers all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership — and also includes socio-economic disadvantage, English as an additional language (EAL) and other potentially vulnerable groups.

Legislative and statutory framework

This policy takes account of current UK legislation and statutory guidance, including (but not limited to):

- The Equality Act 2010 and associated public sector equality duty (PSED)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (latest edition)
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest guidance)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- DfE guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and on dealing with homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying
- OFSTED inspection framework (2025) priorities where relevant: Safeguarding, Inclusion, Curriculum and Teaching, Achievement, Attendance and Behaviour, Personal Development and Well-being, Early Years, Post-16 Provision and Leadership and Governance

School vision, values and equality commitment

- Our vision: “Create a school and pre-school of excellence for Catholic families and families in our locality. All our children achieve their full potential in their academic, social, moral and spiritual selves. Guided by our Gospel values, children are prepared for and are able to cope with the challenges they may face in their future lives.”
- Equality commitment: We aim to ensure every child and adult is respected, valued and able to flourish. We will actively challenge prejudice, foster mutual respect and ensure policies and practice are inclusive and accessible so that no one is disadvantaged because of who they are.

Definitions

- Direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and positive action as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- Protected characteristics: those listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- Reasonable adjustments: changes the school will make to ensure disabled pupils and staff are not substantially disadvantaged.

Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure compliance with the Equality Act and PSED.
- Approve and monitor the Equality Policy and objectives.
- Require regular reporting on equality outcomes and progress.

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Promote an inclusive culture, model inclusive leadership and ensure policy implementation across school and pre-school, including wrap-around care.
- Ensure reasonable resources are available (staff time, CPD, adaptations).
- Ensure equality impact assessments (EqIAs) are undertaken for major decisions.

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- Coordinate monitoring, audits, EqlAs, staff training and communication regarding equality.
- Provide support to staff and families regarding adjustments and inclusion

All staff

- Promote an inclusive environment, respond to discriminatory incidents, make reasonable adjustments and ensure equality aims are embedded in day-to-day practice.
Pupils
- Treat others with respect and contribute to an inclusive school ethos through pupil voice, councils and leadership roles (e.g. eco-council, head pupils, play leaders).

Parents, carers and community partners

- Support the school's inclusive values and work constructively with the school to meet children's needs.

Principles and objectives**Principles**

- Equality of opportunity for all.
- Celebrate diversity and challenge prejudice.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and staff.
- Tackle harassment, bullying and discrimination in every form.
- Ensure transparency and accountability through monitoring and action planning.

Objectives

- Objective 1: Close gaps in attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND in reading, writing and maths by targeted interventions and adult support in class.
- Objective 2: Ensure all staff consistently expect high standards of writing across the curriculum and that pupils apply grammar, punctuation and structural skills.
- Objective 3: Align pre-school planning and practice precisely with Reception phonics and early mathematics so children are better prepared for Reception.
- Objective 4: Improve attendance for identified groups and reduce persistent absence through targeted support and family engagement.
- Objective 5: Ensure accessible school premises and resources and annually review the accessibility plan.

Implementation strategies and practice

Admissions and attendance

- Admissions: The school follows its Voluntary Aided admission arrangements and equality law. Admissions decisions are made without unlawful discrimination.
- Attendance: Monitor attendance and persistent absence by groups (PP, SEND, EAL, religion, disability). Use targeted support (early help, attendance plans) and reasonable adjustments where barriers exist.

Practice examples:

- Ensure information about admissions and services is available in accessible formats and languages as needed.
- Use flexible appointment times and pastoral support for families facing barriers.

Curriculum and teaching

- Curriculum design and delivery should be inclusive, culturally responsive and consistent with the school's Catholic ethos.
- Ensure curriculum sequencing and content promote representation, avoid stereotyping and teach about equality, human rights and British values in age-appropriate ways.
- Make appropriate adaptations for pupils with SEND and for EAL learners.
- Ensure high expectations for writing across subjects; teachers insist pupils apply taught grammar and spelling in cross-curricular writing.

Practice examples:

- Regular curriculum audits to check representation and accessibility.
- Planned opportunities for oracy, vocabulary development and Reading for Pleasure.
- DfE- and Ofsted-aligned subject leadership to ensure subject-specific policies complement whole-school policies (e.g. spelling/handwriting, feedback).

Assessment, achievement and progress

- Use inclusive assessment that recognises different needs and provides fair access to demonstrate learning.
- Track outcomes by protected characteristic groups and use data to shape targeted support and interventions.
- Ensure marking and feedback are manageable and subject-appropriate (e.g. spoken feedback vs written marking) and that pupils know when they have succeeded.

Practice examples:

- Regular data reviews each term by SLT and governors focusing on small groups (PP, SEND, EAL).
- Adaptive assessment arrangements for exams and internal testing where needed.

Behaviour, discipline and exclusions

- Behaviour policies emphasise restorative approaches, prevention of discrimination and consistent expectations.
- Ensure exclusions are lawful, proportionate and analysed by group to prevent discriminatory patterns.

Practice examples:

- Clear expectations for respectful behaviour reflecting Catholic values.
- Pastoral support and targeted intervention before considering exclusion.

SEND and accessibility

- Ensure compliance with the SEND Code of Practice; maintain an accessible and regularly updated accessibility plan (physical environment, curriculum access and communication).
- Provide reasonable adjustments and targeted in-class adult support for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged.

Practice examples:

- Regular multi-agency reviews and person-centred planning.
- Training for staff on specific needs (autism, speech and language difficulties, sensory needs).
- Ensure Pre-School practice maps onto Reception expectations for early maths and phonics.

Religious observance and collective worship

- Maintain the Catholic character of the school while respecting freedom of religion or belief.
- Accommodate reasonable requests for prayer, dietary requirements and religious dress where lawful and safe.

Practice examples:

- Timetabled collective worship that is inclusive and age-appropriate.
- Clear guidance for parents on religious observance and school expectations.

Gender, sexual orientation and relationships education

- Follow statutory RSE guidance while adopting an age-appropriate approach consistent with our Catholic ethos and legal duties.
- Protect pupils from HBT bullying; adopt an inclusive pastoral response that recognises family diversity.

Practice examples:

- Clear behaviour standards and PSHE/RSE curriculum content reflecting respect and safeguarding.
- Guidance and support for transgender pupils and families based on best practice, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Race, ethnicity and language

- Promote an inclusive curriculum and celebrate multiculturalism.
- Provide language support for EAL learners and ensure assessments reflect English proficiency fairly.

Practice examples:

- Celebration of cultural events and ensuring library and curriculum resources are representative.
- Use of translators and accessible formats for parental communications where needed.

Age and family circumstances (including pregnancy and maternity)

- Protect staff and pupils from age discrimination; support pregnant pupils/staff and their return to school/work with appropriate adjustments.
- Recognise the needs of carers and families facing economic hardship; signpost to support.

Staffing, recruitment and professional development

- Follow fair recruitment practises and equality law when hiring.
- Monitor staff diversity, uptake of CPD and career progression to prevent discrimination.
- Provide training on equality, safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, unconscious bias and curriculum adaptation.

Practice examples:

- HR processes for reasonable adjustments, flexible working and maternity/paternity support.
- Annual CPD plan for inclusion and equality topics.

Engagement with parents, carers and community

- Proactively engage parents/carers through accessible communication channels, regular consultation (e.g. surveys, parent forums) and targeted support for under-represented groups.

Practice examples:

- Use interpreters for meetings, consider evening or flexible meeting times, and offer digital and printed information.
- Work with local faith and community organisations to celebrate diversity.

Procurement, contractors and third parties

- Ensure contractual arrangements require equality commitments from partners and monitor compliance.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

- Collect, analyse and publish equality data (safeguarding and pupil outcomes) annually to inform objectives and action plans.
- Use subject and leadership monitoring (learning walks, book scrutiny, pupil voice) to evaluate policy impact.
- Present termly reports to governors and produce an annual equality report including progress against objectives and accessibility plan updates.

Practice examples:

- Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for policy changes, major decisions and budget allocations.
- Termly SIAMs/self-evaluation and evidence aligned to OFSTED/Diocesan expectations.

Recording and responding to incidents

- Provide clear procedures for reporting and recording discriminatory incidents, bullying and hate incidents (including HBT, racist or disability-related incidents).
- Ensure timely, proportionate responses, pastoral support and education for perpetrators and victims.

Practice examples:

- Maintain an incident log; review patterns and act to prevent recurrence.
- Liaise with external agencies where required (police, LA, diocesan advisers).

Complaints and grievance procedure

- Maintain a clear, accessible complaints process for pupils, parents and staff. Ensure complaints related to discrimination are escalated and investigated promptly and fairly.

Communication and publication

- Publish the Equality Policy, objectives and relevant reports on the school website and in accessible formats.
- Ensure parents and staff are aware of the policy, reporting routes and how to raise concerns.

Review and continuous improvement

- Review this Equality Policy at least annually and whenever there are major changes to legislation, school context or OFSTED/Diocesan guidance.
- Use monitoring evidence, stakeholder feedback and EqIAs to update objectives and practice.

Related policies and documents

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy
- SEND policy and Local Offer
- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions policy
- RSE/PSHE policy
- Recruitment and staff conduct policies
- Data protection and equality impact assessment templates

- Diocesan guidance