

## EQUALITY POLICY

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

We are growing together on our journey of achievement with Jesus in our hearts, heads and hands.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

In St. Joseph's Catholic School, we believe that everyone is of equal value. Each person is a unique individual with their own special qualities and will be encouraged to develop respect for themselves and everyone with whom they come into contact.

Equality does not mean treating everyone the same; it means treating people fairly, with respect having regard for their rights and wishes. Sometimes, this means giving people extra help so that they have the same chances.

We will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance the Equality of Opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In practice, due regard means:

- Be aware of the duty to have due regard when making decisions or taking actions and will assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- Consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions not as an afterthought and they will keep them under review on a continuing basis.
- Integrate PSED into the implementation of all the functions of the school and ensure that the analysis necessary to comply with the duty is carried out rigorously and with an open mind. It will never be a question of ticking boxes or just following a particular process.

It is unlawful to discriminate in the following areas, termed protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy – the act extends this protection to pupils
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

### **POLICY AIM**

- To comply with the legislation of the Equality Act 2010.
- To continue to maintain the highest quality education and as a good employer, providing development opportunities for all staff. Under the Equality Act 2010. A

- Faith School can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. This applies particularly to those roles that provide spiritual leadership i.e. Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and for RE Subject Leaders.
- To ensure that the equality remains high on the strategic agenda at governing body meetings.
  - To establish good management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognized as an organizational issue which needs an organizational response.
  - To ensure that all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil.
  - To ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of, one another as individuals.
  - To ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the equality policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure.

St. Joseph's Catholic School has certain exceptions to the general code as applied to most schools with religious character in England and Wales. These are:

- The Admissions Code permits any Catholic school to give priority to practicing Catholics providing that the school continues to be oversubscribed.
- When organizing visits, St. Joseph's Catholic school is not acting unlawfully if it does not organize similar visits for pupils of other faiths.
- The Equality Act does not permit us to offer less favourable treatment to a pupil who no longer belongs to the Catholic Church. This is also true if the pupil's parents no longer belong to the church.
- It is also unlawful for us to refuse to accept a pupil if, for example, the parents are gay. We may apply religious criteria when recruiting or dismissing any member of the teaching staff. In recruitment, remuneration and promotion, although we seek to appoint the person most suitable for the post, we may give preference to persons:
  - Whose religious opinions are in accordance with the Catholic faith.
  - Who attends religious worship.
  - Who give, or are willing to give religious education.

In considering dismissals, the governing body may have regard to any conduct that is incompatible with the precepts of the Church or fails to uphold its tenets.

## **OUR APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUALITY**

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; to promote equality of opportunity; and to promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Through the Equality Policy, the school seeks to ensure that no pupils, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers characteristics identified within the Equality Act (2010) i.e. sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition, this may also include characteristics such as ethnic or national origin, language, marital or civil

partnership status, age, responsibility for children or other dependents, trade union or political activities, social class, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community: pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

### **A COHESIVE COMMUNITY**

St. Joseph's Catholic School recognises the importance of working in partnership with our local and wider community.

In order to achieve a cohesive community, we should:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities.
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community.
- Know the needs and hopes of all our communities.
- Tackle discrimination.
- Increase life opportunities for all.
- Ensure the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps.
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

### **ADMISSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Positive Relationships Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

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**1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. We recognise the need for positive role models and fair distribution of responsibility among staff.

Therefore, we aim to:

- Give learners' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible.
- Encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff.
- Provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of learners.
- Ensure that access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All temporary staff are made aware of equality policies and practices.  
Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

**2. EQUALITY AND THE LAW**

**There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Equality Act 2010.**

**The action plan at the end of this Equality Policy outlines the actions St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will take to meet the general duties detailed below.**

**2a. Race Equality**

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools.

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Single Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality.
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Policy, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils.
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

## **2b. Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **Definition of disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Equality Act 2010 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish a Single Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

## **2c. Gender Equality**

The Equality Act 2010 places general and specific duties on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment.

- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish a Single Equity Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

## **2d. Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2010 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief or sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

## **2e. Gender reassignment**

St. Joseph's Catholic School will ensure that gender variant pupils, or the pupils of transgender parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils..

## **3. CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting.
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET.
- Feedback from the school council, PSCH lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support.
- Feedback at governing body meetings.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Positive Action**

Under the Act, St. Joseph's Catholic School can now lawfully make New Positive Action provisions to allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, members of the school community including pupils with particular protected characteristics. These measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. The school will use these provisions as appropriately as possible.

### **The role of governors**

A named governor will take the lead; the governors as a whole are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation.
- Will update the published policy and information annually.

- Publish equality objectives at least once every four years. The objectives will be measurable and focus on real improvements and positive outcomes.
- Ensuring that this policy and its procedures are followed.

#### **The role of the headteacher**

- Ensuring that the equality objectives and access plans are available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents/carers know about it.
- Ensuring that procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that all staff know their responsibilities and receive training if necessary to support and carry out their duty.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.
- Enable reasonable adjustments to be made in relation to disability in regard to students, staff, parents/carers and visitors to the school.

#### **All staff within the school will:**

- Model good practice, dealing with incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
- Promote equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone.
- Keep up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities if appropriate.

#### **Pupils are responsible for:**

- Keeping equality and diversity issues as a matter of discussion through the school, giving their input where appropriate on policy development such as: the anti-bullying policy, development of school/class rules which challenge any discriminatory behaviour.
- Eliminating all behaviour which is biased and discriminatory, with the guidance and support of the school's staff.

#### **Parents/Carers and visitors / contractors are responsible for:**

- Following our equality policy.

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Headteacher, Leadership Team and the Governing Body.

These responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues.
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents).
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. children in care, disabled and traveller pupils etc.).
- Monitoring exclusions.

## **5. TACKLING DISCRIMINATION**

Harassment on account of faith, race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

Harassment on grounds of faith, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

### **Types of discriminatory incident**

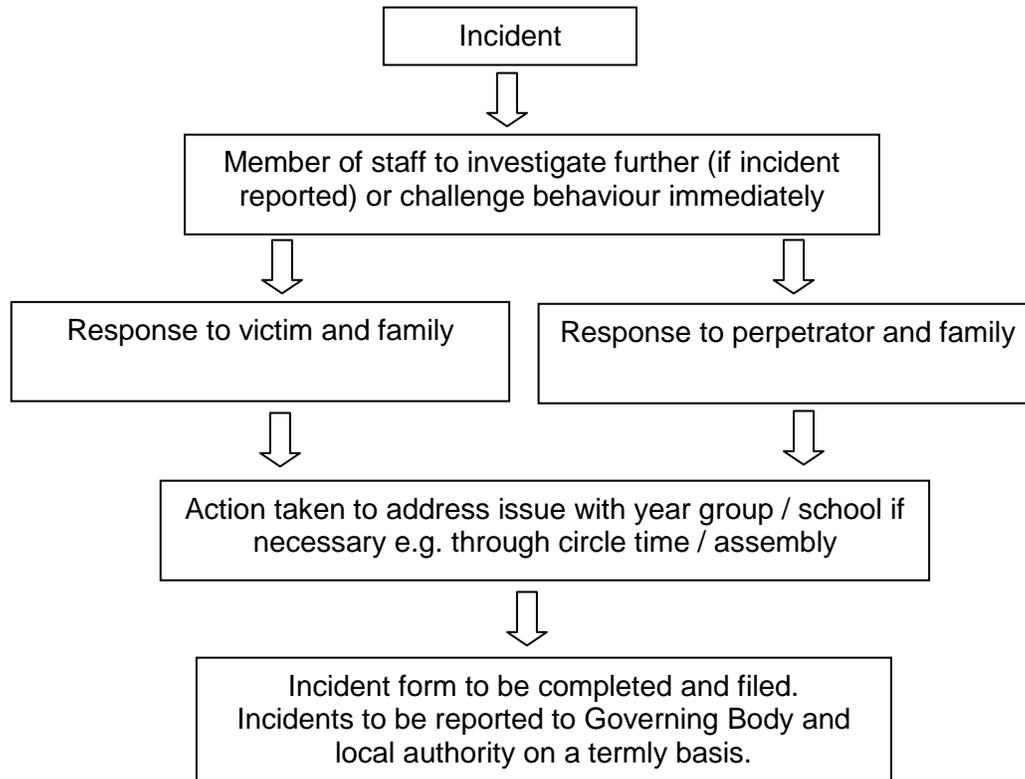
Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, faith, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, faith, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to and reporting incidents**

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



## 6. SYSTEM FOR CREATING OUR SINGLE EQUALITY PLAN

### a) Elect project group.

Include our lead governor and, where possible, a representative from our community.

### b) Equality Information

Gather all the information we already hold. We may wish to consider:

- Achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Attendance levels.
- Exclusions.
- Rates of bullying/racist incidents.
- Access arrangements and take-up rates for school activities.
- Participation of parents at information evenings and school surveys.

### c) Consultation and Engagement

We will consider:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent –consultation meeting.
- Input from staff surveys.
- Feedback from the school council, PSCHÉ lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support.
- Feedback at governing body meetings.

**Engagement: Points to remember:**

- We will take an approach that is proportionate to our size and resources.
- In practical terms, we will not be able to engage with every protected group on every decision. As a starting point we will need to decide how relevant the policy is for equality and good relations and for a particular protected group. It is often helpful to consider how we would be able to explain how you came to this decision.

**d) Priorities:**

Using the evidence that you have gathered in Stage 1, 2 and 3 decide upon your Single Equality Plan objectives.

**For example:**

Increase participation by ethnic minority pupils in after school activities.

Narrow the gap in performance of special educational needs pupils.

Anticipate the needs of incoming pupils from a new group, such as traveller children.

Encourage girls to consider non-stereotyped career options.

Reduce the number of homophobic incidents.

**e) Publishing the plan**

Once the plan has been agreed by the Governing Body:

- Publish your plan on the school website.
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- Make sure hard copies are available.

## **7. MONITORING, REVIEWING, ASSESSING IMPACT**

The policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage any particular sections of our community.

Any pattern of inequality found will be used to inform future planning and decision making.

## **8. PUBLISHING THE PLAN**

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Single Equality Plan Scheme, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website.
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- Make sure hard copies are available.

## **9. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS STATEMENT**

We understand that some disabled applicants may, due to the nature of their disability, find some parts of the recruitment process challenging. We aim to ensure that all applicants are provided with the same opportunities during the recruitment process and,

to that end, we strive to comply with the duties placed upon us to make reasonable adjustments as prescribed by the Equality Act 2010.

Should you have a disability and require a particular adjustment to be made to allow you to fully participate in the recruitment process, please ensure that this is made known to the person identified in the Invitation to Interview Letter when confirming your availability to attend interview as our duty to make reasonable adjustment only applies where we know about, or ought reasonably to know about, your disability (contact details of the relevant person to contact will be provided in your Invitation to Interview Letter).

Below is a non-exhaustive list of some of the types of adjustments that we may make to ensure that the recruitment process is fair to all applicants, if it is reasonable to do so in all the circumstances: -

- Modification to Documentation – this may include providing documents in large print, in Braille format or on audio CD and/or providing oral instruction on documentation for those applicants with a learning disability.
- Modification of procedures for testing and/or assessment – this may include allowing an applicant to provide oral answers as opposed to written where the applicant has, for example, a disability which affects their manual dexterity. Conversely, an oral test may be completed in writing where the applicant has a disability which affects their speech.
- Provision of a Reader for a visually impaired applicant.
- Provision of Auxiliary Aids – for example, a person to guide a visually impaired applicant around the interview venue.
- Provision of special equipment – for example, adapted keyboards for applicants whose disability may affect their manual dexterity and/or large screen computers for applicants with visual impairments.
- Provision of a Sign Language Interpreter for an applicant with a hearing impairment.
- Where interviews are being conducted by telephone, provision for interview by text for an applicant with a hearing impairment.
- Provision of vehicle parking as proximate to the interview venue as reasonably practicable for an applicant with a mobility impairment.
- Modification of interview premises:  
– for example, in order to ensure that an applicant who uses a wheelchair can gain access to the building where the interview is being held, the school may consider using ramps, holding interviews on the ground floor (if there is no adequate lift), considering the placement of furniture and rearranging if necessary etc.

Policy reviewed by P. Sutton

Policy to be reviewed annually.

Policy to be the responsibility of Resources – Staffing Committee

Approved by the Governing Body	/	/
Chair of Governors signature	.....	
Date	/	/
Review date	/	