



ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

*"Faithfully following in the footsteps of Jesus,
we serve, love and learn together
inspiring each other to excellence".*

Policy on Equality

November 13

2023

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Governing Body

Signed..... Date.....

Mr T.O' Malley

Chair of Governors

Review date: November 2023

(This policy on equality subsumes previous separate policies for equal opportunity, inclusion, disability and racial discrimination. These policies have been retained since they provide a greater level of detail and therefore more exact guidance.)

Equality Statement

At St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. Through our mission statement and Catholic beliefs, we aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all members of our school and parish family feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an inclusive environment which has 'no outsiders in our school'. At St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

Background and Legal Framework

Over recent years, schools have been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities and recognising their role in promoting an understanding of equality for different groups of people. Much of this work is in response to legislation that places an increased duty within the specific context of a school's role in providing learning and other opportunities for all - it is about fairness, rights and justice.

Inequality still persists in the UK despite 40 years of equality legislation. In Sefton, we know some groups do less well than their peers in terms of progress, achievement and later life chances. This picture is reflected nationally. The recognition of diversity and the promotion of inclusive and equality practices will help to overcome this disparity.

The Equality Act 2010 unified and replaced earlier legislation relating to equality of opportunity. The Act refers to 9 protected characteristics:

- Age (adults only)
- Disability
- Race (including Gypsy and Traveller groups)
- Religion, Faith or Belief
- Gender
- Gender identity and transgender
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Each characteristic relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. St Patrick's Catholic Primary School will seek to achieve positive action in respect of the Act. In addition, we include economic disadvantage within this policy, recognising that this can have a significant impact on the achievement of children and young people.

This policy 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. St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

Definition of Equality Duty

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School supports the single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the specific duties on public bodies including maintained schools and academies introduced by the Act.

In carrying out our core purpose to educate our children we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not

Our values about equality

- St. Patrick's Catholic Primary actively fosters a welcoming and respectful environment, which allows 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.
- We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that all children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents/carers feel fully engaged in the school.
- We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the world communities.
- We support the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community.
- We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the L.A. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g. homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by 9 principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

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
- whatever their economic or social background.

We therefore act to ensure that each and every member of the school community:

- experiences equality of opportunity
- feels a full and respected member of the school community.
- has high expectations of themselves, their peers, staff, and others with regard to fair treatment.
- develops an understanding of race, ethnicity and multiculturalism alongside an appreciation of their importance in Britain today.
- develops an understanding and appreciation of disability and the contribution of disabled people in the community and United Kingdom.
- develops an awareness of conscious and unwitting racism alongside the skills and confidence to challenge instances of racist behaviour, language and attitudes.
- develops an awareness that disability can be both seen or unseen and that people with learning and other disabilities (i.e., Autism, ADHD) have the same rights to reasonable and appropriate adjustments as those with more obvious needs.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally 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
- economic or social disadvantage.

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, social and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.

We endeavour to 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 aim to consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- people in heterosexual and same sex relationships.

Principle 7: We address prejudice and prejudice related bullying.

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, social and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people in heterosexual and same sex relationships

Principle 8: Society as a whole should benefit.

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

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). 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.

Each year we formulate specific and measurable equality objectives for all pupils including in relation to:

- disability
- race, ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender/ sexuality

Equality in Teaching and Learning

We provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. We do this by:

- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and preparing them for life in a diverse society.
- Understand and celebrate diversity in all its forms.
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community without stereotyping supported by the Andrew Moffat, 'No Outsiders in our School' programme.
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own religion and culture and celebrate the diversity of other religions and cultures.
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Utilising teaching approaches appropriate for the whole school population which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Learn about racial equality in a variety across the curriculum.
- Develop an understanding of global citizenship.
- Understand the power of language particularly relating to verbal abuse due to race, disability, sexual orientation or social standing.
- Develop an understanding of their rights, the rights of others, and their responsibilities to each other.
- Develop emotionally and intellectually with the personal qualities and attributes required to make a successful life in a diverse society.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties.

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and Responsibilities within our school community

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The leadership team is responsible for:

- coordinating equality work within staff teams
- dealing with reported incidents of racism or harassment and reporting these in detail to the Headteacher
- monitoring the progress of minority group children, including those on free school meals and from less economically affluent families
- allocating resources fairly and equitably, including recognising that some children may require more than others for an equal and fair chance to enjoy and achieve.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles cited above.
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

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.

Parents/carers will:

- 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.

Visitors and Contractors are expected to be aware of, and comply with, the school's Equality Policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy will play an important part in the educational development of individual pupils. It will ensure that all pupils are treated as favourably as others and that the school will make all the reasonable adjustments necessary to promote equal opportunity. Learners from all backgrounds will be treated as equal and valued members of the school community. We are committed to meeting the needs of each individual, especially those identified in the 2010 Equality Act.

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

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

The governing body will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the school's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work.

All policies, functions and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in promoting equality.

As further equality requirements come into force, policies, functions and strategies will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of new legislation.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and other key partners. Members of the school community will be kept informed of Equality and Diversity initiatives being undertaken.