



St Joseph's Catholic Middle School

Equality and Diversity



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership

Part of the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust
Company Registration Number 07890590

Signed by Chair	T Neeson
Statutory Policy	Yes
Required on Website	Yes
Review Period	February 21
Next Review Date	February 22
Reviewed by	P Naughton

EQUALITY ISSUES

In line with Equality Act 2010

Equality should be at the heart of everything

St. Joseph's is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- All learners are 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 religion or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of difference and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve their best.
- We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Appendix 2 shows the school’s Equality Objectives in an Equality Action Plan

Development of the policy

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework 2015, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the

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Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, self evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the Senior Leadership Team and School Council.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our recruitment and employment policy.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Governing Body ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We 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 take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school Policy on Behaviour takes account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation

We keep a record of incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of race-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data annually and take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and outside agencies, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps.

We collect and analyse data:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to gender and SEN

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each year: Pupil Premium (inc. FSM)
All SEN
Looked After Children (if appropriate)
Gender

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils

We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary

We also assess accessibility to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the country.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.

We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

We include Equalities matters in our Newsletters to parents.

Other ways we address equality issues

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well being of our pupils.

The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaire and parents' evenings
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the School Council
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress of SEN pupils
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Our Equality Objectives are:

- All pupils to make at least expected progress across Y5/6 in English and mathematics annually
- To increase the number of pupils involved in extra-curricular activities and address any gender imbalance. Minimum target 75% by 2018
- All Pupil Premium pupils to make at least expected progress per year in all subjects annually
- Achieve a year on year (2017-2020) reduction in the % of fixed term exclusions for pupils with protected characteristics
- We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives.

Monitoring and review objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the Governing Body on progress towards achieving them.

We will publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents on the school website.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

Governing Body

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.

Every Governing Body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys).

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

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.

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Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials
- that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at whole staff meetings during the school year.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. 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.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate.

Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy is available:

- on the school website
- as paper copies in school

We strive to ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy and objectives through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the school's website or school planner copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training

This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides

The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders

The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties

The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when the trends or patterns indicate a need

The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives

The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The school ensures that supply teachers to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference

All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the School Council

The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern

Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of our society

Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies

The school takes part in annual events such as Anti Bullying Week

The school environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school

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Open evenings and other events which parents and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school.