

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School Equality Policy, Statement & Objectives



'Christ be in our heads, in our hearts and in our hands'

EQUALITY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Equalities Statement

At St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment
- Valuing diversity and promoting positive relationships
- Providing an inclusive education which enables all pupils to develop their full potential
- Meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation with a single Act. The Equality Duty is set out in section 149 of the Act. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties – or race, disability and gender – and covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender identity
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion and belief
- Sexual identity

We ensure that we have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.

The Governing Body will ensure, that in the cycle of policy reviews, that policies and practices

are scrutinised to identify the effects they have on individuals or groups of people in relation to equality.

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to include all our children in our school community. We do not exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. We pay careful attention to the different groups of children within our school with consideration of the following protected characteristics:

- Disability
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender identity
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion and belief
- Sexual identity

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There is an *openness* of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.
- All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and / or bullying behaviour. E.g Through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions. All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to our school with politeness and respect.
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

Staff and Governors demonstrate our values and commitment to equality by:-

- Ensuring acceptable behaviour
- Responding to incidents and complaints in a proactive way
- Providing access to services, facilities and information
- Recruiting and employing people fairly
- Meeting specific needs.

Equality Objectives

The following priority can be found within the school improvement plan. Objectives linked to this priority are set on an annual basis.

To continue to embed a culture of inclusion and equality across the school community by achieving the Holistic Diversity Badge, ensuring that diversity is celebrated, understood and reflected in all aspects of school life.

The School in Context:

- The school community is predominantly White British with a Catholic background among both pupils and staff. We are committed to promoting and celebrating diversity and equality within our setting.
- We are a Catholic school rooted in Christian values and maintain strong links with our local parish church, St Teresa's.
- Our close partnerships with the church, parish, and archdiocese enhance pupils' religious, spiritual, moral and social development.
- The level of deprivation within the school's catchment area is low.
- Most parents are in employment, with many households having both parents working.
- The school site is fully accessible, including ramp access and a disabled toilet.
- Currently, there are no children in care on roll.

Policy Development

This policy applies to the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of the outcomes of a transparent process and through consultation with staff, parents, children and governors.

Monitoring and Review

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their potential - see Mission Statement and School Prospectus.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils/students:

- Documentation arising for school evaluation
- LSIP provides information by ethnicity, disability and gender and Free School Meals (FSM).
- Attainment data
- Analysis contributes to our School Improvement Plan

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The Governing Body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Attendance
- Suspensions, exclusions and truancy
- All forms of bullying including racism, disability, sexism and homophobia
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extended learning opportunities
- Parental involvement

Monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

We collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff and governors.

Our SIMS management system records data about gender, pupil ethnicity, disability and special needs and is regularly updated. Normal conventions and rules relating to confidentiality are observed as not all the information gathered in school has to be placed in the public domain. The requirements of the Data Protection Act apply in relation to confidential information held.

Developing Best Practice

Learning and Teaching

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

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping.
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people.
- Use materials and language which promote positive images of males and females in society.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different culture and religious traditions.
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality.
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity, whilst promoting the Fundamental British Values.
- All subject leaders' departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups.
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups and pupils.
- Identify resources and training that support staff development.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to

measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils.
- Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We will meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.
- The school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.
- A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage.

Curriculum

At St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community.

Language

We recognise that it is important at St Teresa's Catholic Primary School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case.

Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age. We undertake responsibility for making contributions to extended learning opportunities and are

aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coaches) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy. We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake at St Teresa's Catholic Primary School to make appropriate provision for all EAL children to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils.

- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations)
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.

Staff Recruitment

- 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 policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Note:

Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. As an aided school we ask that teachers have a faith commitment as those roles provide spiritual leadership and promote the foundation of the School. Other roles in school are asked to support the Christian ethos.

In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational requirement on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be

permissible, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

We will work with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Setting up, as part of the schools' commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of all stakeholders of the school community. This has been/will be developed to support the school with matters related to its equalities duties.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities
- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Our Governing Body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.
- The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy.
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality.

Commissioning and Procurement

What is a disability?

- Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:
 - substantial (more than minor or trivial)
 - adverse
 - long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

There is no need for a person to have a specific, medically-diagnosed cause for their impairment – what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause. Examples include hearing or sight impairments, a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties. There are many other types of condition, illness or injury that can result in a person being *disabled* (e.g diabetes, asthma, cancer, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions, facial disfigurement).

GENDER

The term gender includes boys, girls, men and women, and transgender/transsexual people. Sexual orientation is a distinct protected characteristic. (The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender).

What is the difference between sex and gender?

- Sex refers to biological status as male or female. It includes physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia.
- Gender is a term that is often used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. While aspects of biological sex are the same across different cultures, aspects of gender may not be.

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexism is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or are perceived to be so. It is based on the assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as **homophobia**, although **lesophobia** and **biphobia** are also coming into use. Whether through institutional practice or personal behaviour, the prevalence of heterosexism is likely to mean that LGB people feel excluded and unsafe. This effect can be mitigated by an actively welcoming and supportive environment.

Sexual orientation is defined as an individual's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as her or him (gay or lesbian), people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or people of both sexes (bisexual).

Transgenderism and gender re-assignment

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. Gender reassignment is the process a transgender person goes through.