



Single Equality Policy



Updated April 2026

Our Vision

St Marie's is proud to be a Catholic school, using the teachings of Christ as our foundations.

Within the care of Our Blessed Lady, we aim to make our school a place where children can safely learn through outstanding and innovative teaching, build on their potential, fulfil their dreams, and grow in faith and love

Our Mission

As Christ's hand and feet on earth, we will...

- Follow the teachings of Christ so that all may grow in faith.
- Recognise and value each child as a loved and unique child of God.
- Treat each person with respect, tolerance and honesty in an atmosphere of love and security.
- Celebrate, nurture and strengthen the relationship between our school family: Our school, our families, our parish and our community
- Inspire those within our care to become successful, caring members of our diverse society and transform the lives of others.

Introduction

St. Marie's RC Primary School 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.

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

- 1. 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 religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. **We recognize, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or 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.
3. **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. **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/staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

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 by April 6th 2012.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012.

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.

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 Equality Act is also included in the school prospectus, school website and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers. 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. Equality policy and practices are covered in all staff inductions. All temporary staff are made aware of the Single Equality Policy and practices.

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 Head Teacher 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.

- Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent. As a Roman Catholic primary school we give priority in admissions to members of the Roman Catholic faith. We do not refuse admission to pupils of other faiths or no faith if we have unfulfilled places (as per page 12 of The Equality Act 2010).

Behaviour, Exclusions & Attendance

The school Policy on Behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing Prejudice & 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 treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the Governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

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 carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions home visits.
- 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, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate English and Maths skills.

We collect and, analyse data:

- on the school population by factors such as: 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 – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

Pupil Premium
Ethnicity
Free School Meals
EAL
All SEN
Looked after Children

- We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as 'less able'.
- 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 have also implemented an Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantages 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 and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- 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 our catholic faith and RE teaching, displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

Other ways we address equality issues

- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed, e.g., Governors Meetings.
- 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.

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

- 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 and PSHE lessons.
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans.
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Development Plan)

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. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

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 an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This is part of our School Development Plan.

Monitoring and Reviewing Objectives

We will review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We will publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, 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. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

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, and exclusions.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher 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.

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 curricular and 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.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

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.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- 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 and carers.

Disseminating the Policy

This Equality Policy is available;

- on the school website
- as paper copies in the school office
- as a summary in the school prospectus

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

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

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