ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Equality Policy

March 2025

Our Mission Statement

The Mission of St. John's Catholic Primary School is to grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus by being: responsible, caring, prayerful, creative, independent, thoughtful, curious and respectful. We live our Mission by:

- Ensuring that our attitudes and values are transmitted through a curriculum that is consistent with the Catholic faith
- Delivering a curriculum that is relevant, varied, interesting, stimulating, balanced and appropriate
- Developing policies and schemes of work which recognise that R.E. is an integral part of the curriculum
- Developing sound teaching and effective classroom management
- Generating a positive attitude to learning where realistic expectations of pupils and high standards of work are expected
- Using a variety of teaching approaches that reflect the needs of individual pupils
- Participating in projects which focus on the needs of others including local and international charities.
- St. John's is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school, established by the Church to serve the parishes of St. John the Baptist, Trowbridge, St. Bernadette's, Westbury and St. Thomas More, Bradford on Avon.

EQUALITY POLICY

St John's Catholic Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

This policy should be read alongside the following other school policies:
* Anti Bullying Policy * Behaviour Policy * Child Protection Policy * E-Safety Policy * Freedom of Information Policy *GDPR Policy * Health and Safety Policy * Home School Agreement * Mission Statement * Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy * Safer Recruitment Policy * Staff Code of Conduct * Whistleblowing Policy

In addition all staff will have read and understood Part 1 of the latest version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, (KCSiE), September 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity, diversity and community cohesion, whilst actively eliminating discrimination. In response to statutory duties to publish equality schemes for gender, disability and race equality, we will foster good relations regarding the legally Protected Characteristics for Schools (i.e. race, disability, gender, religion/belief, sexuality).
We recognise that these duties and intentions 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.

The School Context

St John's is a Catholic school, promoting a strong sense of Christian community. We are committed to providing the widest possible learning experiences and opportunities to achieve within and outside the national curriculum. In fulfilling the legal obligations and our intentions cited above, we are guided by nine Guiding Principles.
(These Guiding Principles are detailed in Appendix 1).
Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.
Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.
Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.
Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.
Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.
Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence and information.
Principle 9: We set ourselves SMART objectives to address findings.

Equality – Our Aims and Values

1. The school will promote a positive and inclusive ethos, based on Gospel Values.
2. We will not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their gender, age, race, ethnic origin, religion or disability. The school is committed to the fostering of mutual respect for all human beings.
3. We will promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
4. We will ensure that all pupils, where reasonable, have equal access to the full range of education that we provide in our school
5. We will strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
6. We will ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training arrangements are fair to all.

7. We will challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
8. We will show respect for all minority groups and aim to prepare pupils for life in a diverse society, ensuring our pupils are aware that other communities may differ from their own.
9. We aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's legitimate point of view.

2. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUALITY

The school's Equality Policy provides a framework to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds within the school's Catholic ethos.
The school seeks to ensure that no pupils, staff, parents, guardians, carers or other adults involved with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified, always mindful that this is a Catholic school where the principles of the Catholic faith will be upheld. This covers race, ethnic or national origin, language, gender, disability, age, responsibility for children or other dependents, trade union or political activities, social class or spent convictions. The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and community members.

3. A COHESIVE COMMUNITY

We understand that promoting Community Cohesion is part of our duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. We understand that Community Cohesion is a process which should happen in all communities to ensure good relations between different individuals and groups. It should also allow for new members of the community and existing members to adapt to one another.

In order to achieve a cohesive community we will need to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- Understand and respond to the needs and hopes of our communities
- Tackle discrimination
- Increase life opportunities for all
- Ensure that the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity
- 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
- Explore our Catholic faith in the light of the above

4. RACE, DISABILITY AND GENDER EQUALITY

We are committed to complying with the requirements of the Disability Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting these requirements.
In order to promote disability equality across all areas of the school to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users, within the framework of a Catholic school, and informed by our faith, we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation of disabled people in the life of our school and in public life
- Take steps to meet the needs of disabled people even if this requires more favourable treatment in some instances.

- Monitor staff and pupils by disability

We plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils by:

- Monitoring and, if relevant, increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- Improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils, ensuring that it is to the same standard as that provided to pupils who are not disabled. This may include giving additional time to complete activities, modifying teaching materials, offering alternative activities.

In order to promote racial equality across all areas of the school to pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users, within the framework of a Catholic school, and informed by our faith, we will:

- Strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups

It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with our school procedures.

In order to promote gender equality across all areas of the school to pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users, within the framework of a Catholic school, and informed by our faith, we will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in every area of school life
- Recognise that nationally the achievement of boys is falling below that of girls and strive to ensure that all individuals and groups of pupils are making the best progress possible in our school
- Ensure that any policy designed to improve the attainment of one particular group (eg boys) does not do so at the expense of other groups.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All who work in the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion and avoiding unfair discrimination. Based on school evidence and evaluation of equality practices in our school, in line with statutory requirements, we will formulate and publish at least every four years, specific and measurable objectives. These objectives, which we identify, will take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

School Governors are responsible for making sure that the school complies with all current equality legislation and that its procedures are followed. The Governing Body monitors and evaluates a range of school data to ensure that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving.

The data monitored includes:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Rewards and sanctions
- Parents' and pupils' questionnaires

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- making sure that the policy is readily available and that governors, staff, pupils and their parents/carers know about it
- producing regular evaluative information for staff and governors about the policy and its effectiveness.
- providing training on the policy if necessary
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- ensuring that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy

All school staff are responsible for:

- modelling good practice, dealing with racist incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, ethnic or national origins, language, culture, beliefs, disability. gender, sexual orientation or social class
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and engaging in training opportunities
- Informing the Head teacher of incidents as they occur.

Pupils are responsible for:

- keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda
- working with staff on policies relating to this area such as anti-bullying policies
- developing school and class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Being aware of the school's approach to equality and diversity issues
- Supporting the school's approach by promoting positive attitudes in their children and other children.
- Supporting the school when incidents are being investigated

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following the school's Equality policy

The responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the **Equality Advocate** – a named member of staff and governor. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils
- Monitoring exclusions

6. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING IMPACT

The policy will be monitored on an annual basis through the Head teacher's report to governors or more frequently if required 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 particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.

Monitoring will include:

- The progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school
- Staff appointment process

- Taking account of any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity *(see form P1 – Report of a Prejudice Related Incident – Appendix 2)*
- Monitoring the school's Behaviour policy and its application.

7. POLICY REVIEW

The Governing Body will undertake an annual review of the school's Behaviour Policy and remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses found without delay.

Equality Advocate: Debbie O'Mahony
Equality Governor: Mike Simmons

APPENDIX 1: Guiding Principles
APPENDIX 2: Report of a Prejudice related incident in school (Form P1)

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body on: 10th March 2025

Head teacher

Signed

Chair of Governors

Signed

Review cycle:	Annually
Next review due:	March 2026

APPENDIX 1 – Guiding Principles

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.
We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value: o whether or not they are disabled

- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their sex (gender)
- whatever their gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background of whatever their sexual orientation

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.
Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) 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 prejudice that 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
- sex(gender), so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background o sexual orientation
- gender identity

(and as relevant, pregnancy/maternity, and in relation to employment; age and marriage/civil partnership).

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, homophobic, and gender identity based 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 sex (gender) and sexual orientation o whatever their gender identity (and as relevant, in respect of pregnancy/maternity, age and marriage/civil partnership).

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 in relation to:

- disabled and non-disabled people

- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds o girls and boys, women and men
- sexual orientation or gender identity

(and as relevant, in respect of pregnancy/maternity, and in relation to employment; age and marriage/civil partnership).

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We 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. As appropriate, we consult and involve groups and individuals in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

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 all groups and individuals in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity
- age

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence and information

We maintain and publish **at least annually**, quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish **at least every four years**, 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), in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity

The objectives, which we identify, take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2

Report of a Prejudice-related Incident in School (Form P1)

Report from:
School:
Date of incident: Time of incident:
Nature of prejudice (race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, gender identity, other):
Ethnic origin of victim - (state whether pupil or member of staff):
Ethnic origin of perpetrator:

Indicate type of incident – please tick:	Provocative behaviour	Verbal abuse or threats	Damage to the person's property
Physical assault			
Derogatory name calling	Prejudice-related materials	Prejudice-related ridicule	Inappropriate form of address
Refusal to co-operate	Attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations	Prejudice-related comments in lessons	Other-please specify below