



## Single Equality Policy and Access Plan



### *Our Lady's Catholic Primary School*

COMMITTEE: Governors

DATE APPROVED: March 2021

POLICY REVIEW DATE: March 2022

*Our Lady's Catholic Primary School*  
**Jesus said, 'Love one another as I have loved you.'**

## **SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

Our school's mission statement: Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you."

Our school aims are as follows:

- To develop children's understanding of the Catholic faith enriching their lives with an understanding of the way Jesus showed us to live our lives.
- To build in our children high self-esteem and a strong sense of wellbeing within a loving atmosphere, developing spiritually and emotionally in partnership with the home, parish and local community.
- To provide a happy and secure and caring environment enabling high quality education to flourish.
- To provide equal access to the curriculum sharing opportunities to explore, experiment and learn.

This Single Equality Policy is part of the school's Single Equality Scheme which also includes a Self Evaluation Framework and resulting actions to be incorporated into the School Development Plan.

This Single Equality Policy sets out the school's generic approach to the Single Equality Duty (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission) to secure equality with regard to (currently) race, disability, gender (including transgender), and, (forthcoming), age, sexual orientation, maternity and paternity and religion/belief. In setting out the school's responses to these duties, this policy also indirectly reflects many of the school's approaches to the promotion of Community Cohesion. Section 5 of this policy ("The school's approach to promoting equality for all") pulls together the duties for race, disability and gender and presents them in a generic way.

Our school is fully committed to ensuring that we do not discriminate against anyone, be they adult or child, on the grounds of their race, nationality, disability or special educational need, gender (including transgender and or gender reassignment), age, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, maternity and paternity or religion/belief. This is in line with the 1976 Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act of 2006 and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

Our over-riding consideration is to:

- celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups
- Provide a supportive, inclusive and empowering learning community for all pupils and adults.

The school recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all potentially vulnerable groups of learners are helped to fulfil their potential, including:

- Boys and girls, men and women

- All minority ethnic groups including Gypsy Roma Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Pupils and others with special educational needs
- Pupils and others with a range of disabilities
- Looked After Children and their carers
- Children with poor records of attendance at school
- Young offenders
- Young carers
- Children at risk from significant harm
- Children living with “vulnerable’ adults

In our school, regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the attainment and achievement of vulnerable groups and individuals enables us to highlight areas where additional intervention may be needed.

This policy and the process of self-evaluation which informs the resultant action plan is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher
- The Chair of Governors
- The Equalities Duty Governor

and its effectiveness is regularly evaluated by

- (Headteacher)
- (Chair of Governors)
- (School Improvement Partner)
- The Equalities Duty Governor

## **2. THE LEGAL DUTIES**

This document is written with very close reference to three key documents:

“Developing Equality Schemes to meet the three existing duties”: Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2009)

“Developing a Single Equality Policy for your school”: Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (2010)

It is written in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

It is also written in compliance with the following legal frameworks:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000)

- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- The Employment Equality Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Part 2) (2006)
- Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified by UK in 1969)
- Articles 2, 23, 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK in 1991)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Disability Equality Duty (2006)
- Article 24 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified by UK in 2009)
- The Gender Equality Duty (2007)
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender re-assignment) Regulations (2003)
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007)
- Articles 10, 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratified by UK in 1986)

### **3. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT**

**a) Significant features of the social, cultural, linguistic, religious, disability diversity of pupils, staff and governors are as follows:**

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school with 14 classes. There are 408 children on role. There are 205 girls and 203 boys. Children's ages range from 4 -11 years. The school is situated on the edge of Wellingborough town.

This is a Catholic school attached to the side of the church of St Edmund Campion. **The school occupies a split site.** It serves the parishes of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Wellingborough and St Peter's, Rushden including the surrounding areas.

Approximately 25% of the children are not Catholic.

Children come from a cross section of homes. Some of the very poorest with high social deprivation and child protection issues.

55% of children are Non White British, 45% of children are white British. The next largest groups are White European and Black African.

13% of children are eligible for free school meals.

The proportion of children on the special needs register is at 7%.

**b) Reasonable adjustments made by our school to ensure that the equal opportunity of pupils, staff and governors is ensured with regard to race, disability or special educational need, gender (including transgender), age, sexual orientation, maternity and paternity or religion/belief include:**

Recognising that some groups covered in this policy may have particular needs and supporting learners with particular needs:

- Adaptations for building access have been addressed through the school's Accessibility Plan so that the school is physically accessible to all, including wheelchair users.
- The school has completed specific, targeted training to enable staff to meet the needs of individuals including training for staff on learning difficulties, speech and language, protective behaviours, manual handling, diabetes and stoma use.
- The school works closely with outside support agencies to ensure the most effective support is in place ( e.g. speech and language therapists and physiotherapists)
- The school purchases and uses a range of specific equipment to enhance learning and support (e.g. to allow different seating/standing and communication arrangements)
- Improved ways for greater involvement of children with disabilities to be given a voice have been implemented e.g. circle time, school council.
- Improved transition arrangements between schools and pre-school.

**c) Staff turnover, pupil mobility and upward or downward trends in relation to % of staff, pupils and governors from different racial groups, with a disability or special educational need, from each gender (including transgender), (or who fall into groups for whom the school needs to give consideration to age, sexual orientation maternity and paternity and religion/belief.**

- *Staff turnover has been low since Jan 2015*
- *Pupil mobility is under 5% – small increase in pupils arriving from Eastern Europe.*
- *Boy/girl balance remains more or less static over last 3 years.*
- *Under 10% of staff from ethnic groups other than White British.*
- *Majority of governors are female.*
- *Governor mobility is minimal.*

**d) Attainment and progress of pupils who would identify themselves (or, in terms of special educational need, be identified) as belonging to different groups according to race, disability or special educational need, gender (including transgender), age, sexual orientation, maternity and paternity or religion is better or worse than that of the school population as a whole, in the following ways (using the last complete year of whole-school performance data):**

*To secure Teacher's knowledge of their Year Group requirements.*

*To ensure that children are active learners in every lesson.*

*To ensure that every lesson is challenging.*

*To develop rigorous and accurate assessment, which is closely monitored.*

*To continue to develop and monitor the effectiveness of our EYFS child-led curriculum.*

*To raise percentage of children attaining expected standard in phonics screening with a particular focus on vulnerable children.*

*To raise attainment and progress in line with National Expectations in all Year Groups.*

**e) Examples of how we seek the views of all our school community, and the wider community, including in relation to equality issues, are as follows:**

- It is explained how the school operates via the School Prospectus, staff handbooks and website
- Information for parents and public is regularly reviewed in line with the DDA.
- The school offers a range of ways of communicating between school and parents that meet parents' circumstances and needs including: home visits (which are undertaken for all new pupils), termly newsletters, SEN review meetings, and parents' evenings.
- The school employs a parent support worker.
- The school encourages an "open door" policy where parents feel comfortable to come in to chat to teachers or the SMT members when they have concerns or question.
- The school encourages community cohesion through strong and effective partnerships with:

Our Lady's Pre-School

North Northants Catholic School Partnership (6 schools in Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby)

5 wells teaching alliance.

- Work experience placements are provided for secondary schools, college and university students.

**f) Some examples (not a definitive list) of how we seek to address equality issues in our school and improve the access and experience of all equality groups, are as follows:**

- By making the school a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin or their citizenship, feels welcome and valued specifically through our Home School Links, Work experience and Voluntary Helpers initiative and our Behaviour Management Policy;

Ensuring a rich and relevant curriculum which celebrates diversity and cultural similarities and differences. In our development of a rich and flexible curriculum we strive to ensure that the curriculum equips pupils for life in a diverse community e.g.

- Community Cohesion is promoted in Religious Education, PSHE/Citizenship and through English, Drama, Music and Art in particular.
  - Students undertake studies of specific countries in Geography as part of a themed topic.
  - Different religions and beliefs are covered and various festivals celebrated.
- Celebrate individual and personal success in a weekly celebration assembly.
  - Pupils are aware of the school's anti-bullying strategies which encourage and develop empathy, tolerance and understanding and the school reacts swiftly to unacceptable behaviours against minority groups, recording and monitoring these incidents.
  - The school operates a school council where all pupils regardless of ability, gender or race are able to have a voice and for views to be taken into account.
  - Offering Performance opportunity for every child in the school through class and year group assemblies/ concerts. This opens the school's doors for parents of **every** child in **every** year group in turn to see their children perform.
  - Fund raising for local, national and international charities (eg. Cafod, Children in Need, Comic Relief) and ensuring understanding of the purpose and impact of the activity

## 4. RATIONALE

This Single Equality Policy and Access Plan is not a stand-alone document. Its main function is to present a set of principles which permeate all other school policies and practices. It is closely related to other key school documents as follows:

- Mission Statement
- School Aims
- School Improvement Plan
- Policies: Behaviour
  - Anti - Bullying
  - Pay
  - Selection and recruitment
  - Admissions
  - Attendance
  - Collective worship



## Performance management

As a school, we recognise that there are some core inclusive values that underpin this Single Equality Policy and Access Plan and ensure respect for all. These are:

- **Fairness** : no school policy or procedure will unfairly advantage or disadvantage any member of the school community.
- **Trust** : we begin with the premise that all members of the school community will behave with good intent towards each other.
- **Participation** : no member of our school community will be barred in any way from participating in any school activity which could be reasonably expected to be open to all. For those school activities where it would be common practice to be chosen or elected, (i.e. representation at a meeting, on a committee, on the school council or on the Governing Body) we will be able to demonstrate that the selection process was fair and transparent.
- **Consultation and negotiation**: Representatives of different stakeholder groups within the school community (i.e. pupils, staff, parents, governors) and of all seven identified diversity groups covered by this policy (race, disability, gender (including transgender), age, sexual orientation, maternity and paternity and religion/belief) will be consulted over major policy decisions being taken by the school.
- **Collaboration** : we will work together as a team in which every member has a view and a voice which is worthy of consideration.
- **Transparency** : the reasoning behind decisions made in our school will be open and subject to scrutiny.

We strive to build, within our school, our locality and the partnerships with which we are involved, a strong and cohesive community, which prepares young people for adult life in

- a diverse, inclusive society
- a welcoming community that fosters positive relationships and values diversity as a rich learning resource
- a barrier-free community founded upon a joint sense of belonging.

We strive to nurture in our pupils and staff the personal qualities which we consider essential in a member of a school community and in a citizen of the wider community and society which values equality and respect for all:

- thoughtfulness
- honesty
- integrity
- caring
- kindness
- responsibility
- humility.

**Every member of our school community will be challenged and held to account for upholding the rationale of this Single Equality Policy and Access Plan.** We recognise that individual members of staff, governors, parents or pupils may have different views on a number of equality issues. Our main priority is not to demand that anyone changes their views but that, as a school, we clearly describe what the school considers acceptable/unacceptable and how everyone is expected to behave in school. No matter what individual people's views might be, our first priority is to ensure that the school complies with every aspect of equality legislation and the duty to promote community cohesion.

## **5. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR ALL**

Our school works in the following ways to secure equality and respect for all.

**a) Current policy and practice in the school shows commitment to meeting the duty to promote race, disability, and gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring that our mission statement, aims and core values relate to every member of our school community.
- Ensuring that we regularly evaluate the impact of all school policies (particularly admissions and attendance, behaviour, collective worship, target-setting, teaching and learning and performance management) on the equality groups as identified in this policy and take action to improve our policy and practice where necessary, through having specific actions on the school development plan.
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, the equality groups as identified in this policy are reflected in the language and images of all publications (including the school prospectus, publicity to promote school events, website).
- Ensuring that, wherever possible and without artificiality or unbalanced representation, there are positive images of the equality groups as identified in this policy, in school policies, in school publications, in learning resources and in displays.
- Ensuring that the school has clear, commonly understood processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice.
- Ensuring that equality values are represented in the everyday language and behaviour evident in school and that senior leaders regularly monitor the school climate in relation to this, in order that tolerance levels in relation to language or behaviour are maintained.
- Ensuring that the school makes the strongest possible efforts to minimise any barrier to the participation and engagement of parents with regard to their child's development and in other aspects of school life.

**b) The school can clearly demonstrate how it assesses the impact on equalities of its current policies and practices on race, disability and gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring that the school has consistent and reliable procedures for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour towards the equality groups as identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

**c) The school has secure arrangements for ensuring equality of opportunity with regard to the recruitment, development and retention of employees. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring that, whilst adhering to equalities law and fair recruitment practice, every attempt is made to achieve diversity in the workforce and governing body which is representative of that within the school, the local community and the wider community.
- Ensuring that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues, complaints, allocation of responsibilities, professional development and opportunities for all staff to progress are monitored to ensure that equality is upheld as a central consideration when judgments and decisions are made.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this Single Equality Policy and Access Plan and wider equality issues through staff training and professional development and that this is an essential element of the induction training for all staff.

**d) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to the educational opportunities available to the pupils in the specified groups. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that there are opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard.
- Ensuring that, where possible and appropriate and without contrivance or artificiality, curriculum themes and content reflect the rights and interests of the equality groups as identified in this policy and promote greater tolerance towards them, across a breadth of curriculum which is wider than planned direct teaching within RE, PSHE and citizenship.
- Ensuring that all of the equality groups as identified in this policy have the same opportunity to access educational visits and other school trips as any other pupil in the school.
- Ensuring that all pupils can participate equally in all aspects of school life, including extended school activities.
- Ensuring that school events or activities, including those arising from the extended school offer, celebrate diversity.

**e) The school can demonstrate equality of opportunity with regard to the achievements of pupils in the specified groups. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring that the school has processes for monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of all pupils and the comparative attainment and achievement of pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy. Thereafter ensuring, where there are discrepancies, that appropriate intervention is put into place which will narrow the gap between the attainment and achievement of all pupils and of those pupils from the equality groups identified within this policy, where these are lower and need to be addressed.

**f) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to attendance, exclusion and anti-bullying. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring it has effective attendance, behaviour and anti-bullying policies which are applied equally to all groups and do not disadvantage any member of our school community.
- Ensuring that the school has processes for avoiding the exclusion of any pupil and that these processes are equally applied to and equally effective for pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school can clearly demonstrate the steps it takes to eliminate harassment and bullying of pupils or staff in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

**g) The school's links with local organisations and community groups as touched on above represent its commitment to raising the awareness of its pupils, staff and parents with regard to the equality groups identified in this policy by:**

- Ensuring that the school has links or partnerships with other schools, colleges, local or national groups, charities and organisations which also promote equality.
- Ensuring that the school does not have links, partnerships or connections with local or national groups or organisations which overtly promote prejudice or intolerance or, in the way in which they operate, exclude or disenfranchise members of any of the equality groups identified in this policy.

**h) With specific regard to disability equality:**

The School already makes the following provisions for children with disabilities under the Disability Discrimination Act:

- Adaptations for building access have been addressed.
- Improved transition arrangements between schools.
- Whole school training related to health issues e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes.
- Consultation with parents with reference to the Healthy Schools programme.
- Whole school training on safeguarding issues.

- Looking at whole school policies with the potential for any discrimination that may arise e.g. anti-bullying policy.
- Implementation of ways for greater involvement of children with disabilities to be given a voice e.g. circle time, school council.
- Involving children (all of whom have disabilities) and their parents in making decisions.
- Further staff training related to visual difficulties and hearing impairment.
- Specific training for EYFS relating to communication and hearing impairment difficulties.
- Whole school training on the teaching of reading and phonics approaches in particular plus use recent Early Years national guidance related to early child development and PHSE.

## **6. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING IMPACT**

- The Single Equality **Scheme** (which incorporates this policy as one of its three elements) will be reviewed on a three year cycle.
- Our school will judge the effectiveness of this Equality **Scheme** by:
  - using the Single Equality Scheme Self Evaluation Framework,
  - by evaluating progress towards equality targets as specified on the School Development Plan (and their impact)
  - by canvassing the views of the stakeholders listed above (perhaps through questionnaires or focus groups).
- Evidence of the impact of the equality scheme will include :
  - Comparative attainment and overall progress of pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy.
  - Pupils' learning and awareness of equality issues and how they demonstrate these, so they are well prepared for adult life in a diverse and inclusive society.
  - Feedback from parents, staff and other community users on the culture of equality within the school.

## **7. ACTION PLANNING**

Our school recognises that it is a legal requirement to develop specific targets for each of the equality duties. These will be incorporated in the Equality Action Plan.

## **8. PREVENTING AND DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Our school recognises that the groups covered in this policy may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment and all acts of reported bullying are acted upon swiftly, recorded and reported to parents.

They are analysed with a view to monitoring vulnerable groups. Incidents of racism are reported to the Local Authority.

Our approach to behaviour management is based on strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect. This helps us to protect the most vulnerable whilst supporting and enabling all children to develop positive behaviour patterns.

## **9. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will maintain a strategic overview of the currency and efficacy of this Single Equality Scheme.

The Single Equality Policy and Access Plan will be reviewed annually.

DATE OF PUBLICATION March 2020

DATE FOR REVIEW March 2021

### **Our Lady's Catholic Primary School Equality Access Plan**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>AIM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>REVIEW</b>
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<b>Collation &amp; analysis of bullying incidents in school</b>	To keep precise records of bullying incidents including frequency, type and level of issue	D&B records will be kept, analysed and acted upon to reduce bullying incidents in school	HT/DHT	Each term the records are analysed, evaluated and acted upon
<b>Reporting of equality data to Governors</b>	To inform the school governors of the frequency, type and level of bullying / harassment incidents each term	The Heads report to the governors each term will include a breakdown of D&B incidents tracking the frequency, type and levels of incidents.	HT/DHT	End of year Comparing / compiling and evaluating annual Statistics
<b>Equality Policy Review and communication to parents</b>	To ensure school equality policies are up to date, implemented effectively and shared with governors & parents.	The equality policies will be reviewed and updated in the light of the Equality act April 2011 at least bi-annually and uploaded onto the school website.	Govs Policy Review Committee	Bi-annual timetable of policy review evidenced in governors minutes
<b>Communication of Equality Policies to staff</b>	To ensure equality policies are shared with staff annually	Equality policies will be included in the staff handbook shared with staff each September	SBM	Staff handbook review and evaluation each September
<b>Parent &amp; Pupil Consultations</b>	To listen to parent and pupil concerns relating to equality issues and take appropriate positive action	Parents and pupils will be given annual surveys that include questions relating to equality issues. The data will be analysed and evaluated and issues acted upon and outcomes communicated to parents.	PIO	Annual update and evaluation of surveys

<b>Responding to equality issues affecting pupils on a weekly basis</b>	To respond to equality issues pupils face on a weekly basis and communicate action to staff.	Equality issues relating to particular pupils will be responded to by the SLT on a weekly basis & communicated to staff each week via the weekly diary providing details of decisive action to be taken.	SLT	Ongoing review and adaptation By the SLT
<b>Pupil Profiles &amp; information</b>	To provide opportunity for pupils to communicate worries and bullying issues	Pupils will complete 'pupil profiles' that ask pupils about any worries or bullying issues they may face	Class teachers	SLT to review each term and act upon data in practical ways
<b>Anti-bullying week</b>	To hold an annual anti-bullying week that informs pupils and parents and staff of the how to Say No to Bullying in the school setting.	An anti-bullying week will be held each year involving pupils, parents and staff that highlights ways pupils can combat bullying in school in positive ways.	HT	SLT to review effectiveness each year
<b>Disability Accessibility Plan</b>	To improve accessibility in school for disabled pupils	Accessibility in school for disabled pupils will be improved this year as a result of fulfilling actions from the action plan	SBM	Review annually and report to governors