



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Equality Policy

Mission Statement: 'Loving, Learning, Reaching out to All'

Introduction:

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act, and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

This Equality Policy and Action Plan sets out the school's approach to promoting equality and diversity in-line with legislative requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

The Single Equality Act reflects the Government's commitment, 'to narrowing gaps, and to tackling the barriers to equal opportunities and social mobility which hold individuals back, and bring heavy social and economic costs. Equality is central to building a strong economy and fairer society. It underpins the Coalition's guiding principles of freedom, fairness and responsibility'.

The Government believes that they need to reform education to tackle educational inequality, which has widened in recent years. They believe, 'that too many children are held back by disadvantage and discrimination ...and that the Equality Act gives us all an opportunity to do this in a more streamlined and effective way'.

This Plan sets out some of the ways in which, as a school, we are going to tackle inequality and promote equality, to raise standards and narrow gaps. It includes an action plan outlining what we intend to do between now and September 2025 to bring to life our equality priorities.

School In context:

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School which serves the former Parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Joseph and Our Lady Help of Christians.

Although the majority of children on roll are baptised Roman Catholics, the school admission policy allows for and welcomes children from other faiths.

17% of pupils are currently on the ever 6 register (Jan 2022 census) below national

Knowsley is one of the 20% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England and about 25% (7,460) children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average.

The number of pupils with significant needs requiring SEND support is 17% including 5 children with EHCPs, and 1 going through the assessment process . The number of children with SEND is still disproportionally high when compared to the national figure 15% (national statistics). This has been a challenge for the school over the past few years and has had vast implications on finance and support. Following the implementation of the SEND code of practice, the children on the SEND register are only those with significant need.

There has been a steady increase in the number of EAL children year on year. This is now above the LA average and below the national average and we have sourced support from the EMAS team.

Historically social mobility had been stable in school; however, we have seen an increase in departures and mid-year admissions in recent years due to families moving into and out of the area.

Statement of Principles:

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At Our Lady's Catholic Primary School Catholic Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, socio economic background, or any other recognised area of discrimination.

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Equality in our school:

- The school is committed to celebrating diversity and equality in many ways, in particular by recognising the uniqueness of every individual, as reflected in the Mission Statement.
- Good personal and community relations are actively promoted by fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all members of our community.
- Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.
- Information on ethnicity, gender and disability is collected through the admissions process.
- Whole school systems emphasising praise, recognition and reward exist to promote and celebrate positive behaviour, sustained effort and hard work, contributions to the school community, and achievements outside school. An Assembly celebrating 'Star of the week' is held each week.
- We promote positive attitudes towards disabled people by having an open admissions policy and including all children in all activities.
- We promote positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups/religions
- We involve pupils, parents and staff in the life and work of the school, for example through involvement in community events and through our friends of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School parents group
- We promote high expectations through celebrating achievement.
- We communicate behaviour expectations through modelling good behaviour, and having a clear and explicit Behaviour Policy which is shared with pupils and parents.

Teaching and Learning:

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach their potential.

To do this, we:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we track pupil progress and identify under-performance, and provide support to individuals and groups of pupils. (see action plans in SIP)
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and SEND and action any gaps.
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils

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- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and interests of all pupils
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Ensure that the school's Marking Policy promotes learning for all.
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance, for example through termly monitoring of data, recognising and awarding high attendance.
- 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
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Use the no outsiders programme throughout school to teach children about protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Equality Act, and supports schools' efforts to be inclusive and cohesive.

Supporting Learners with Particular Needs:

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs, the school:

- We prepare Personal Provision Plans to focus on learning priorities for any child in care.
- Provide in-class TA support and intervention groups for all children identified through Provision Mapping.
- Arrange language support as required.
- Support vulnerable pupils through work with the Pastoral lead.
- Provides appropriate training to enable staff to meet particular learning needs, such as training from School Nurse.
- Will draw on the expertise of outside professional services to meet the individual needs of pupils.

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.

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- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils. Adults in 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 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 used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration is given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

Monitoring and reviewing

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School 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 her or his potential. We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils. Using the analyses provided for us by the Local Authority and ASP.

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
- Exclusions and truancy
- Racism, homophobia and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in Extended Learning Opportunities

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and

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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.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and the school improvement plan
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and ensures that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and reports progress to the governing body. The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

- The SLT have 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 and staff with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour

Tackling Discrimination:

Bullying and harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation are unacceptable and are not tolerated within the school environment. All parents of new pupils receive a summary of the school's behaviour expectations and Anti-bullying Policy as part of an Induction Pack.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents should be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the Headteacher. All incidents are discussed with the Governors. Incidents are monitored to ensure that they are dealt with effectively.

What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Bullying and harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Types of Discriminatory Incidents That Can Occur Are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference, for example food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting Incidents:

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school, and ensure that incidents are reported and addressed swiftly and effectively. The agreed procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

1. Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately
2. Inform Headteacher
3. Response to victim and family
4. Response to perpetrator and family
5. Action taken to address issue with year group / school if necessary e.g. through circle time / assembly
6. Incident to be recorded on CPOMS .
7. Incidents to be reported to Governing Body.

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Recruitment of staff:

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School 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 the population.

Review of the progress of policy and action plan:

We recognise that the strength of this Policy depends upon ensuring that everyone is actively implementing it, and that gaps and the need for further development will arise from effective evaluation.

The SLT and Governing body are responsible for ensuring the policy is maintained and updated regularly and that actions procedures and strategies relating to the policy are implemented. Staff, pupils and parents will be consulted on how the policy is working and how it could be improved. All aspects of inclusion and equality will be reported via the school website and newsletters.

Publishing the plan:

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Single Equality Plan, we will:

Publish our Plan on the school website

Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications

Make sure hard copies are available.

The School's Equality Action Plan:

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school.

These will form the basis of the action plan

Low income backgrounds – pupil premium above national (low socio-economic background)

- Special Educational Needs - above national
- Lack of life experiences
- Poor communication and language skills of children entering the Reception class
- Knowledge of other cultures and faiths

The school improvement plan further details actions to be taken to address inequalities in specific cohorts e.g. narrow the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, girls outperforming boy in writing in specific cohorts.