



ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ALDERSHOT A VOLUNTARY ACADEMY IN THE DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY (September 2018- amended Sept 2020)

VISION STATEMENT

As a Catholic family we welcome all and value Christ in everyone, whilst seeking the highest possible achievements.

The School's Vision and Mission Statements underpin this document.

Introduction

The governing body and school is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief. We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where physical and cultural diversity is celebrated.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our learners, staff, governors/ directors and parents in particular. The school opposes all forms of harassment, prejudice related incidents and discrimination and publicly celebrates diversity. The school also actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is respected and inclusion is a strength of the school.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all pupils. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff are able to confidently deal with any forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. It is our aim to ensure diversity is respected.

Equality of opportunity cannot be realized without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, in particular the recognition of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

All forms of harassment are dealt with in line with relevant school policy. Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with these and confident in their knowledge that such behaviour

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is always unacceptable.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way. All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's single equality policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Legal Duties

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people of different groups

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunity.

At the same time, it should be recognized that St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a faith school and therefore certain exceptions to the Equality Act 2010 apply.

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- Age(for employees)
- Disability
- Race
- Sex(including transgender)
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees/ parents)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to fulfill specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish equality information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions. (We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child)
- Prepare and publish equality objectives. (See appendix- action plan0

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. That data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

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In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit
- Ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda
- Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the schools single equality policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure
- Ensure all forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility are treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

This school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We take very seriously any prejudice related discrimination against or by our staff, pupils, parents or any other members of our community. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents.

Policy and Planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race and disability equality, will be considered and recorded whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Equality in Employment

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discriminatory laws with a single Act. It simplified the law, making it easier for people to understand and comply with. It also strengthened the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality.

Equality monitoring and recruitment

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, in all staff appointments, is to appoint the best candidate based on strict professional criteria.

However, the school notes and follows these guidelines relation to recruitment:

- Employers must avoid direct and indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from a disability, harassment and victimisation in all aspects of recruitment. They must also make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- The Equality Act makes it unlawful for any employer to ask questions relating to an applicant's health prior to a job offer. This means employers can no longer ask how many days sickness absence an applicant has had on either the application form, at interview, as part of the reference request or informally in the pre-offer part of the selection process. A general rule is that questions relating to a person's health can only be made once an offer of employment has been made to enable any reasonable adjustments to be made for those with a disability or other health condition. Managers are still able to ask if an applicant requires any adjustments for interview. An employer can still ask about disability for monitoring purposes to check the

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diversity of applicants, although equality monitoring forms must always be detached from the application form before they are passed to the panel so they do not form part of the recruitment process.

- The Equality Act allows positive action to be taken if an employee or job applicant who has a particular protected characteristic suffers a disadvantage connected to that characteristic, or if their participation in an activity is disproportionately low. The Act also allows a protected characteristic to be taken into consideration when deciding who to recruit or promote, however this can only be done when there are candidates who are “as qualified as” each other for a particular vacancy. Evidence would be needed to show that people with that characteristic, face particular difficulties in the workplace or are disproportionately under –represented in the workforce.

A policy of automatically treating job applicants who share a protected characteristic more favourably in recruitment and promotion is not allowed. This means the abilities, merits and qualifications of all candidates must be considered in each recruitment exercise, otherwise it would be unlawful and discriminatory.

Equal pay – direct discrimination

The Equality Act retains the framework that was previously in place. In most circumstances a challenge to pay inequality and other contractual terms and conditions still has to be made by comparison with a real person of the opposite sex in the same employment. However a change in the Equality Act allows a claim of direct pay discrimination to be made, even if no real person comparator can be found. This means that a claimant who can show evidence that they would have received better remuneration from their employer if they were of a different sex may have a claim, even if there is no-one of the opposite sex doing equal work in the organization.

Development

The leadership team, staff and directors/governors will be encouraged to take up all relevant opportunities for training on equality matters.

The school will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status:
- Provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs:
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils can make:
- Equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, discriminatory practices and behavior and to promote anti-discriminatory behavior generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self-development, encouragement and motivation. The school places great importance on the relationship between team members and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the school’s performance management system.

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Monitoring

We regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We report termly to the Community and Pupil Welfare Committee and annually to the FGB on our progress and performance.

Admissions

The school follows the diocesan policy and does not permit sex, race, disability or other protected characteristics to be used as criteria for admission. The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin or disability.

According to The Equality Act 2010 schools with a religious character may give priority in admissions to members of their own religion. The Admissions Code provides that this may only be done when a school is oversubscribed – schools subject to the Code are not permitted to refuse admission to pupils not of their faith if they have unfilled places.

Responsibility

We believe that promoting Equality is the whole school's responsibility.

School Community Responsibility

Directors/Governing Body

Involving and engaging the whole school community in working to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; advancing equality of opportunity between people of different groups; and fostering good relations between people from different groups. Also involving and engaging the whole school community identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these.
Monitoring progress towards achieving equality objectives.
Publishing data and publishing equality objectives.
Practising equality in recruitment and employment duties.

Executive Principal and Head Teacher

As above including:
Promoting key messages to staff, parents and pupils about equality and what is expected from the school in carrying out its day to day duties. Ensuring that all school community receives adequate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including pupil awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Practising equality in recruitment and employment duties.

Senior Management Team

To support the Head as above
Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities.
Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.

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Teaching staff	<p>Help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils. Uphold the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated. Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum. Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.</p>
Non-Teaching Staff	<p>Support the school and the governing body in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders Uphold the commitment made by the head teacher on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated Support colleagues within the school community Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.</p>
Parents	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p>
Pupils	<p>Supporting the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality. Uphold the commitment made by the head teacher on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider community can be expected to be treated.</p>
Curriculum	<p>Pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. Our PSHE curriculum forms a key part of this and it has been revised in 2020. Equality should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly. Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum and should be reflected in planning documentation.</p>
Local Community Members	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving quality of opportunity for all.</p>

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External Agencies

This school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils or staff members and ensure equality of opportunity. This relationship will include teachers, specialist teachers, teaching assistants, welfare assistants and midday assistants. Among these specialists are the following:

Physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapist, doctors, the school nurse, social workers, and the staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies.

We benefit from the LA's advice, and its provision through the Sensory Support services and Educational Psychology group sessions.

We will ensure that the whole school community is aware of the Single Equality Policy and our published equality information, equality objectives and accessibility plan by publishing them on our website or requesting paper copy from the school office. Community members unable to access these will be able to have the information read and explained to them in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by

- active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but
- also in its review and implementation
- proactive leadership
- prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
- removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our

Scheme includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years.

We recognise that improving outcomes such as attendance or attainment for a specific group of pupils will help to improve our outcomes for all. Our commitment to equality is thus a fundamental part of our drive towards excellence and achieving our vision of 'As a Catholic family we welcome all and value Christ in everyone whilst seeking the highest possible achievements'

School Context

St Joseph's Catholic School is a voluntary Academy which provides education for children aged 4-11 years and serves the area of Aldershot in Hampshire.

The main religious group is Catholic (88%)

Approximately 90% of children come from the Aldershot area and 10% come from the surrounding district.

The school has a large proportion of special needs children. 141 children (29%) are on the school's Intervention Register:

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Across the school, based on 481 NoR (Sept 20):

141 children SEN pupils
6 children EHCP

176 children (5+) (37%) are from ethnic minority backgrounds There have not been any Racial Incidents in the past 5 years.

87 children (5+) (18%) are EAL children

30 children (6%) receive free school meals.

There are no children in care.

28 (5.7%) children are service children

Involvement of staff, pupils, and parents

a) Developing our Scheme

The involvement of a diverse group of people has been instrumental in shaping our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We have strived to involve the full diversity of our school and community, recognising that people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief are best placed to identify key issues for us to address.

b) Ongoing involvement

We have strategies in place to promote the participation of pupils in decision-making and in making a positive contribution to school life. We will embed equality and inclusion into these strategies so that learners from diverse backgrounds are involved in shaping provision and improving practice.

For example,

- The School Committee reviewed behaviour on the playground and we now have members on the Key Stage 1 playground to monitor any behaviour issues with guidance from the teaching staff
- The School Committee reviewed our 'what to do if you are unhappy at school' practices
- The School Committee has reviewed our Behaviour Management Policy and Anti-bullying Policy

We ensure that outcomes from these involvement activities are acted upon by the school's Senior Leadership Team.

Deciding what to do

Information gathering

Our single equality approach helps us to more effectively monitor our progress and performance, as our pupils and staff may face more than one barrier to achieving their full potential.

Specific Equality Areas

This section of our scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality, and further action that we intend to take.

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A) Race Equality

At St Joseph's Catholic School, we are committed to and aim specifically to:

1. protect individuals from any form of unlawful racial discrimination
2. promote equality of opportunity
3. promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

b) Disability Equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to and aim specifically to:

1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. eliminate unlawful discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act
3. eliminate disability- related harassment
4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. take steps to meet disabled peoples' needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

c) Gender Equality

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to and aim specifically to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
2. promote equality of opportunity between men and women
3. provide our pupils with a firm foundation that will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of their gender

Impact Assessment

We will carry out equality impact assessments on our policy and practice which will cover all aspects of equality: race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We will look for ways to improve practice as well as ways to eliminate discrimination and harassment. We have a programme of carrying out impact assessments on our existing policies, practices and procedures and we will build the impact assessment process into all new policy development and decision making activities.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

The views of relevant stakeholders e.g. disabled children / parents and staff will be taken into account.

Publishing the Scheme, raising awareness

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

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- placing it on our website
- making it available on request

Links with other school policies

School policies that link with, and have informed this Scheme include:

SEN policy
Racist Incidence guidelines
Anti- Bullying policy
Behaviour Management policy
Staff Pay policy
Admissions policy

Background to policy

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives for a single Equality approach at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Aldershot. It was developed in consultation with pupils, staff, parents and the Directors/governing body.

DATE OF APPROVAL:
September 2020

DATE OF REVIEW:
September 2021

Signed: Mrs D McNeill
Headteacher

Dr Campbell McCafferty CBE
Chair of Directors/Governors