



St Joseph's Roman Catholic High School

Equality Policy

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Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith.

Approved by Governors:

Date for Review: Autumn 2019

1 Mission Statement

“Our school is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and His message the guiding principle behind all we do.

Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith”.

At St Joseph’s RC High, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life. The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At St Joseph’s RC High School, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2 How do we make this work?

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Collect data and analyse it to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps. This will apply to all vulnerable groups in the school as identified by RaiseOnline (eg FSM) and include socio-economic background.
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Endeavour to ensure equality of access for all pupils Prepare all pupils for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of modern society.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice and gather data to monitor.
- Promote equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning to both pupils and staff.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate diversity.
- Seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child’s education.
- To encourage attitudes to teaching, learning and classroom management that are appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of all our pupils.
- To ensure that we have adequate inclusion provision for pupils who have been identified as ‘able, gifted and talented’.
- To promote inclusivity for all extracurricular activities including residential stays and school visits (selection criteria, where applied, must be transparent and no pupil can be denied access to any such activity because of special educational need or inability to pay).

Admissions and Exclusions

The Governors of St Joseph's RC High School are the admission authority for the school as a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic School. Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or socioeconomic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Learners and volunteers are made aware of the existence of this policy and where it can be accessed.

3 Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St Joseph's RC High School.

St Joseph's RC High School will adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against staff, volunteers or anyone involved in external agencies the organisation may be working with on the grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation. In addition, there will be no discrimination against pregnant females or new mothers, staff, learners or volunteers undergoing gender re-assignment.

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.

Employees are made aware of the existence of this policy and where it can be accessed.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer Duties

As an employer, we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

(This includes part-time staff who will be treated in compliance with their rights under employment law). Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

There are some exemptions from this legislation in situations where the essential nature of a post calls for a man, woman, or a person from a particular religion or racial group. This school, as a Roman Catholic school may seek to appoint staff who are members of the Roman Catholic faith for the purposes of sustaining the ethos of the school. This applies to the following types of appointments, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Head of RE and Chaplain.

The Governing Body will give sympathetic consideration to requests for time off for religious observance from staff who are active members of particular religions or beliefs, in accordance with the school Leave of Absence Policy.

The Governing Body will wherever possible, make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties created by applicants or members of staff who have a disability.

In compliance with DDA, the Governors, in their Recruitment Policy, must ensure that disability will not be a factor in preventing the full and proper consideration for interview and selection. Reasonable adjustments will be considered as required.

The Governing Body acknowledges these areas of regulation and confirms its commitment to enforce these statutory requirements in the school.

The overriding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all Governors and staff in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Advertising of Vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases, vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are reasons why this should not occur, for example, in situations of potential overstaffing or redundancy.

Selection for Appointment or Promotion

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- i. a detailed job description will be drawn up which accurately describes the duties of the post.
- ii. a person specification will be defined from the job description.
- iii. a list of objectively assessed selection criteria will be drawn up from these documents.
- iv. a job description, person specification and selection criteria (with indications of those which are 'essential' or 'desirable') will be available to all candidates.
- v. shortlisting will be carried out against the selection criteria and a written record retained of the assessment of each candidate.
- vi. all interview panel members must be trained in selection techniques.
- vii. at least one person on each panel will be trained in equality and the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation, as well as Safer Recruitment.

Positive Action

The Governing Body recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the school. The Governing Body will, therefore, give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy. This is action designed to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups.

The Governing Body will not discriminate in favour of individuals from specific groups (positive discrimination), but it will take positive action which enables members of those groups to compete on an equal basis. Positive action measures may include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention.
- Continued Professional Development opportunities for all staff.
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4 Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Equality Act (2010).

4a Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality.
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils.
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.
- Record and monitor racial incidents in school and report to Governors and the LA each on actions taken. We will analyse this data to ensure that measures are adopted to prevent such incidents. All members of the school community are alerted to this and are urged to be vigilant.

4b Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Additional Learning Needs Policy, Disability Equality Scheme and JCQ 'Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties'.

Definition of Disability

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'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Action Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them.
- Review and revise this Action Plan every three years.

4c Gender Equality

- The Equality Act 2010 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of

opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex, or gender reassignment.
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Action Plan which covers the requirements for identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them.
- Review and revise this Action Plan every three years.

4d Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2010 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools, this means pupil admissions, benefits and services for pupils and staff and the treatment of pupils and staff.

4e Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new Section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the Governing Bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths/beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

5 Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of governors, staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evenings, and PSA meetings.
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings/INSET.
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education.
- Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support; Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

6 Roles and Responsibilities - The Role of Governors

- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, staff and visitors and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

- The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socioeconomic background, race, gender or disability with due consideration to the school's capacity, ethos and Admissions Policy.
- The Governing Body ensures that no child or adult is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

The Role of the Headteacher (or Senior Leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the Governing Body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities. 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 Role of all Staff: Teaching and Non-Teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Action Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender, sexual orientation and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.
- The SENCo will be responsible for identifying pupils requiring extra support. This will be provided in accordance with JCQ Regulations.

7 Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

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, Manager of Learning, and SLT member as necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and bullying, discriminatory and racist incidents are recorded and reported to the Governing Body and LA on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

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'.
- Incident Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately.

- Response to victim and family.
- Response to perpetrator and family.
- Incident form to be completed and filed.
- Incidents to be reported to Governing Body and local authority on a termly basis.
- Action taken to address issue with year group/school if necessary e.g. through assembly.

Types of Discriminatory Incident

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 group.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. 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 nonteaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school. The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

8 Review of Progress and Impact

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Action Plan annually and review the entire policy on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, the Welfare and Wellbeing Committee and the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Governing Body, together with the School Data Manger, regularly monitor achievement by vulnerable groups as defined in RAISEonline including ethnicity, gender, SEN and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

9 Publishing the Plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- Publish our Equality Policy on the school website.
- Raise awareness of the policy through school newsletters, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- Make sure hard copies are available.