



EQUALITY POLICY

Rationale:

This Equality Policy for Holy Family Catholic Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies – who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a one form entry primary school. 12.5% of our pupils receive free school meals and 68.32% of our children are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- The dignity of the human person:

God loves us. God loves everyone. We are all different. We are all unique. We are equally loved. People matter more than possessions. We have all got different gifts and talents.

- Family and community:

Family at home and family at school. We look after each other. We learn to walk, talk, love, forgive, share, belong. We are all needed in our families and our communities. There are different communities. There are different ways to belong. We all have rights and responsibilities to our families and communities. We are all helping to create God's kingdom.

- Solidarity and the common good:

We play together. We help each other. We bring peace to each other. We learn together. We celebrate together. We are grateful for each other. We listen to each other. We walk alongside each other in times of peace and of challenge.

- Rights and responsibilities:

God wants everyone to be happy. We have all we need for everyone's happiness. We need to share fairly with everyone. We need to make the right choices and help others to make the right choices. We need to recognise the right of everyone to happiness. With rights come responsibilities. We need to take responsibility to ensure other's happiness. We need to share and give.

- The option for the poor and vulnerable:

We play together. We share together. We learn together. We use our gifts to help others. We need to recognise inequalities. We need to explore fairness and justice. We need to recognise who needs our help and how can we help them.

- The dignity of work:

The gifts we have been given are invaluable and are needed to continue God's work. We need to work together for each other, in school, at home, in life. We need to work hard to be the best we can be for others. We need to recognise equality: working together, sharing gifts, enabling others, ensuring all achieve and are able to use their gifts to support the community/the world.

- Stewardship:

We discover God's beautiful world; caring and helping it to grow. We are thankful and celebrate the harvest. We learn about interdependence; how we can make good choices and be good gardeners; how we need the air and plants and animals. Everything is interconnected. We learn about the consequences of unequal distribution of resources and poor choices. We understand what being good stewards entails. We see God in all creation.

Our vision statement about Equality

Holy Family Catholic Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Headteacher will:

- Ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy.
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy and ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy.
- Develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available.
- Monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy.

Our Governing Body will:

- Designate a committee with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy.
- Ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School's Strategic Plan when necessary.
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary.
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy.
- Evaluate and review the policy annually.

Our pupils/students will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability.
- Be expected to act in accordance with the Policy.
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy.

Our parents/carers will:

- Be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy.
- Have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements.
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy.
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.
- Be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Our school staff will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy.
- Be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them.
- Understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy.
- Make known any queries or training requirements.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors, non-teaching staff and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

Responding to prejudice based incidents:

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

Date of Policy: September 2021

Ratified by Full Governing Body: September 2021

Review date: September 2022