

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Educate: Create: Witness: Christ at the Centre



Equality and Diversity Policy

September 2024

Introduction:

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our school's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embedding equality within teaching and resources
- Using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our school
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting parental engagement
- Investing in regular staff training
- Using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues

Aims and objectives:

As a result of this policy we will:

- ensure that all members of the school community feel happy, safe and secure
- ensure that equality of access exists for everyone
- promote equality of opportunity regardless of the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, sexuality, gender reassignment, civil partnership and marriage, and pregnancy and maternity

- actively develop the self-esteem and self-respect of all members of the school community
- ensure that educational provision is relevant to our increasingly diverse society
- ensure that the curriculum actively promotes equality of opportunity
- actively challenge all forms of bullying, harassment, prejudice and stereotyping
- actively engage the support and commitment of the whole school community in achieving the above aims.

Relevant legislation and best practice advice:

We are aware of our responsibilities in relation to:

- 1970 Equal Pay Act
- 1975 Sex Discrimination Act
- 1976 Race Relations Act
- 1988 Education Reform Act
- 1995 Disability Discrimination Act
- 1998 Human Rights Act
- 1999 Macpherson Report into the Stephen Lawrence Murder Inquiry
- 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act
- 2001 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act
- 2002 Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality
- 2006 Equality Act ♣ 2006 Sexual Orientation Regulations
- 2006 and 2007 Employment Equality (Age) Regulations and Amendments
- 2010 Equality Act.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation
- 2018 Data Protection Act

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance & Absence Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- LAC Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy

Protected Characteristics: We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or prospective pupil because of their:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.

- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Age

We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated.

We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have.

1. Sex

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a pupil's biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. We understand some pupils identify as a gender different to the one they were assigned at birth, and we will support pupils through their transitioning phases.

We will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils of other sexes.

The school will only separate pupils by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so, or if one of the following applies:

- Pupils will suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex
- One sex has needs that are different from the needs of the other sex
- Participation in an activity by pupils of one sex is disproportionately low

The school will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.

Pupils will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity in the school, e.g. in relation to technology lessons, all pupils will be allowed to choose which skills they learn.

There may be occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, but we will ensure that such classes do not give pupils a disadvantage when compared to pupils of the other sex in other classes. Occasions where pupils are separated to be taught in single-sex classes will be documented and the separation justified to ensure parents, Ofsted and, where necessary, the wider community can understand the reasons behind separation. Where a subject is taught in a single-sex class, trans pupils will be allowed to attend the single-sex class that corresponds with the gender they identify with.

Pupils' age and stage of development will be taken into consideration before segregating sports teams. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities; where separation is deemed necessary, the single-sex sports teams will receive the same quality and amount of resources.

2. Race and ethnicity

We will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure pupils with EAL are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times.

We will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' will not be tolerated, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

We may, however, take positive action, e.g. organising open days for pupils and families of a specific race that is under-represented, to address the particular challenges affecting pupils of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

3. Disability

We will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.

We will avoid implementing rules that could have an adverse effect on pupils with disabilities (e.g. by making physical fitness a basis for admission, or asking all pupils to deliver a presentation, as this could be unfair towards pupils with anxiety), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

We will ensure that we do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

We will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan.

We will meet our duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented and reviewed where necessary.

The school adheres to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

We will ensure that any medical conditions related to a pupil with a protected characteristic is fully supported in line with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

4. Religion and belief

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that pupils are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the school's Attendance and Absence Policy.

The school will liaise with local religious leaders of all faiths to inform the amount of leave pupils will be granted in relation to religious observance.

5. Sexual orientation

We will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that pupils are taught about the nature of marriage, including same-sex marriage, by presenting the facts of English and Welsh law – teachers will not offer personal opinions when discussing marriage in RSHE. We will educate pupils on positive relationships, families and gender identities within the LGBTQ+ community. RSHE lessons will be taught in accordance with our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

We will ensure that any religious beliefs with regards to sexual orientation are taught to pupils in an educational context, in a manner that is not prejudicial or discriminatory.

We will support LGBTQ+ pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our school where pupils can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

6. Gender reassignment

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. We will regularly check our school practices to ensure that they are fair in this regard. We recognise that gender reassignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support of trans pupils by external sources. Any such absences will be recorded accurately and sensitively by the SENCO to ensure the privacy of the pupil.

Pupils have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity within the constraints of our dress code, outlined in our School Uniform Policy.

We will ensure that there are suitable toilet and changing facilities for pupils to use, including.

- Gender-specific toilets and changing facilities.
- Private changing facilities.

The facilities will be made available to all pupils and pupils can use the facility they feel most comfortable in, e.g. if a trans pupil wished to use a private changing room.

We will support trans pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our school where trans pupils can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

7. Pregnancy and maternity

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they become pregnant, have recently given birth, have children or are breastfeeding.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of pupils who are pregnant or have just given birth.

To ensure all school-age parents and pregnant pupils are properly supported and the school can fulfil its duty of care, the school has a Supporting Pregnant Pupils and School Age Parents Policy.

8. Marriage & Civil Partnership

- Where appropriate, opportunities will be provided for pupils to learn about, and to discuss, matters to do with civil partnership and marriage
- Pupils will be discouraged from using offensive language about civil partnership and marriage
- People will be welcomed and valued no matter their personal circumstances, their marital status, whether in a civil partnership or not
- Appropriate use will be made of suitable external support services, including those in the local authority, to ensure that equality of opportunity exists in relation to civil partnership and marriage.

9. Age

Guidelines, Age:

- All pupils will be expected to do as well as they possibly can
- All pupils will be expected to behave as well as they possibly can
- All pupils will be encouraged to make equal use of all the resources and facilities in the school
- Resources will reflect the variety of families that exist in Britain today
- Resources will show people of all ages engaged in non-stereotypical roles and activities
- Where appropriate, the National Curriculum will be used to value and celebrate diversity based on age
- Daily acts of collective worship will be used to promote equality of opportunity irrespective of age
- Pupils will be discouraged from using offensive language about age and commended when they challenge such language

- People will be welcomed and valued no matter their age
- Appropriate use will be made of local authority support services to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Role & Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities All who are associated with St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School have a responsibility for promoting inclusion, equality, diversity and community cohesion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

Our governors are responsible for:

- Be responsible for ensuring the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
 - The way the school provides and education for pupils.
 - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
 - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the headteacher.

Our Head teacher is responsible for:

- Implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

All our staff are responsible for:

- Be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and to deal with incidents of harassment and/or discrimination as the highest priority.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, and pertaining to their specific roles.
- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.
- Act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community.

All our pupils are responsible for:

- Treating others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination or harassment.
- Attending school and engaging in their learning, as well as helping other pupils to learn.
- Telling staff about any prejudice-related incidents that occur.

All our parents are responsible for:

- Supporting our school as it implements this policy.
- Providing role models for their children through their own actions.
- Ensuring their children attend school and engage in learning.
- Telling staff about any prejudice-related incidents that occur.

Responsibility for overseeing equality, diversity and community cohesion practices in the school lies with a named member of staff and a named governor.

Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality, diversity and community cohesion.
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist, sexist and homophobic incidents).
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. black and minority ethnic pupils, including Travellers).
- Monitoring exclusion.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Staff and Governors will monitor the Equality and Diversity Policy once a year. Three years following its adoption, the Governing Body will decide whether the policy needs amending in the light of new legislation and/or best practice guidance.

Revised by: Head, staff & governors:

Next Review: October 2025 or sooner if regulations / circumstances change

Appendix 1

Glossary of commonly used terms relating to equality and diversity

Bullying:

Bullying can be defined in many ways such as:

- Doing things with the deliberate aim to hurt. Occasions when individuals feel that they have been victimised.
- Deliberately leaving someone out.
- Repetitive acts of abuse.
- Deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- Deliberately hurting or frightening someone by what is said or done.
- The abuse of power by an individual or group in relation to another individual or group.
- The intentional abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent and motivation to cause distress to another individual or group. Such abuse of power may be physical, verbal, sexual or psychological in nature.

Discrimination:

Treating an individual or group less well than another individual or group is treated. Such differential treatment accords advantages to some and disadvantages to others. Although it is possible to engage in positive discrimination - presently unlawful except in a few specific situations in the UK - most people define discrimination as unfair treatment leading to disadvantage. Present legislation renders discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, race, religion and belief, and sexuality unlawful. Also, present legislation reminds us that discrimination can be either direct (overt, or intentional) or indirect (covert, or unintentional). Whether direct or indirect, discrimination on the above grounds is unlawful.

Harassment:

Any behaviour or action directed at an individual that is found to be offensive to the recipient and might threaten an employee's job security or create an intimidating environment. Inappropriate words or actions which humiliate, ridicule, embarrass, intimidate, frighten, distress or otherwise undermine. Harassment can be on the grounds of a person's age, disability, gender, nationality, race, religion or belief, sexuality or any other personal characteristic.

Institutional racism:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

Minority Ethnic Group:

Everyone belongs to an ethnic group and, for historical reasons, the UK contains many such groups. A minority ethnic group is usually defined as a group which differs from the majority in a given nation state. Difference may be based on physical characteristics (e.g. skin colour), culture, religion and/or language. Many minority ethnic groups experience disadvantage and/or discrimination.

Prejudice:

Prejudice can be defined in many ways such as: An unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought or reason. Any preconceived opinion or feeling, either favourable or unfavourable. Unreasonable feelings, opinions or attitudes, especially of a hostile nature, directed against individuals or groups deemed in some shape or form to be different. Prejudice may assume a variety of characteristics such as a tendency to judge a whole group on the basis of visible difference or on the basis of assumed characteristics. Prejudice is usually based on inadequate information. In other words, attitudes or opinions which are prejudiced are usually based on lies, half-truths, legends or myths.

Racism:

Racism can be defined in many ways such as: Prejudice plus power. Prejudice plus power plus action. Belief in the superiority of the ethnic group to which you belong and, through either numerical superiority or control of the decision-making institutions, possessing the means to realise that belief. Racism exists when political, economic and social institutions are dominated by a particular ethnic group and that ethnic group uses its control of the institutions to discriminate against members of other ethnic groups. Treating someone less well than others because of the ethnic or racial group to which they belong.

Racist Incident:

A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Scapegoats:

People who bear the blame for things they are not responsible for.

Sexism:

The belief that males and females are better equipped to fulfil different roles in society, perhaps because of their inherited characteristics or their physical and/or biological differences. Prejudice or discrimination against people, especially girls and women, because of their sex.

Stereotypes:

A standardised, fixed image or conception of people which is applied to all people in that category. The vast majority of stereotypes perceive the groups concerned in a negative or patronising manner. All stereotypes negate individuality and deny us the opportunity to engage with people as fully rounded, complex beings. Stereotypes deny us the opportunity to engage with reality.