



BROWNEDGE ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
'Let your light shine'

EQUALITY STATEMENT & POLICY
(INC Disability Equality Policy)

Approved by Governors (Name):

(Committee): School Standards Committee

Signature of Head Teacher/Chair of Governors:

Date: February 2026

Date of next review: February 2028

Policy Revised by (Name): Mrs N Oddie

Date: February 2028

Brownedge St. Mary's Catholic High School

Single Equality Plan

Equality Policy Statement

Brownedge St. Mary's is committed to equal opportunities and aims to consider the needs of the individual in the School community. Equality of opportunity is central to the ethos of the School as outlined in the Mission Statement of the School with a focus on tolerance and inclusion:

MISSION STATEMENT

If we love others, we live in the light. 1 John 2:10

Inspired by our Gospel Values we have a shared responsibility to:-

- create an environment of welcome, love and respect for **each member** of our learning family.
- develop the unique gifts and talents of **all**, striving for excellence in everything we do.
- live out our commitment to love, service and justice in the local and global community.
- nurture the journey of faith and discovery for **all**.
- celebrate and reflect on the love of God, which is at the heart of **all** we are.

By implication from this mission statement the "all" referred to means each and every member of our school community, irrespective of protected characteristics defined by law at the current time.

Context

Brownedge St Mary's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic secondary school situated in Bamber Bridge, near Preston. The school is smaller than average in size and draws its pupils from the surrounding areas of South Ribble. The majority of pupils and staff are White British and speak English as their first language. At the time of writing this policy, the % of pupils for whom English is a second or additional language is 5% of the school community. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, with 2.4% holding an EHCP. The school is physically accessible on all with ramps, lifts and wider doors to make access easier for wheelchair users. There are disabled changing facilities in the gender-neutral toilet area and on the first floor of our Extended Learning Centre.

Implications for all staff, pupils and members of the Community

Brownedge St Mary's prides itself on its strong ethos and warm inclusive welcome. At Brownedge, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community. There is an openness and warmth of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school. All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions. All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.

Each person is unique, with God-given talents, and inspired by the example of the Gospel we aim to treat each person with the same dignity and respect.

This simply means that all members of the community and visitors to our community will be treated equally irrespective of **age, gender, colour, religion, social class, ethnic origin, disability, cultural heritage, family origin, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment pregnancy/maternity.**

Where societal or perceived barriers exist that prevent individuals from achieving their potential, including explicit or implicit discrimination, it is the responsibility of each member of staff and each member of the community to overcome those barriers. Staff are entrusted to lead the way in fulfilling this duty and to set an example for all pupils.

The School will not accept words or actions which display prejudice against individuals due to the categories listed above. Nor will it accept glass ceilings on achievement for those who experience disadvantage or exceptional talent. Our task is to break down perceived glass ceilings where they exist and to try to break down any barriers we can to help children fulfil their potential.

Aims of this plan

This plan derives from the Equality Act 2010 (as amended by the Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023, in force from 1 January 2024) and it encompasses all other equality policies in the school. It establishes the legal and moral duties upon Governors, The Headteacher and all staff to promote this plan

This school recognises that direct and indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a positive and effective equality plan. This plan will:

- ensure that equality, enshrined in our Mission Statement, is at the heart of all other policies.
- ensure there are mechanisms in place to evaluate the impact of our equality plan on all areas of school life

The School's values, aims and objectives all accord with the equal treatment of people promoted by national laws and regulations, and the rights enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and The Equality Act 2010. Definitions are in line with EHRC technical guidance 2023–2025.

- **Gender reassignment:** protection applies to pupils or staff who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process to reassign their sex. Medical treatment is not required for protection.
- **Sex:** for the purposes of equality law refers to biological sex. The school applies this definition when implementing equality duties and curriculum content.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's Equality Plan is maintained and updated regularly (at least every two years)
- That procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The named Equality Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to all said incidents

The Governing Body as employer has additional responsibilities. Namely:

- To follow the legal duties of equality in the recruitment, pay, promotion and conditions of all staff so that all decisions are free of any discrimination (see below)

The Head teacher and Senior Management is responsible for:

- Along with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Plan
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Equality Plan;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Not discriminating on grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed above
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

All staff will ensure that the commitments embodied in our mission statement for equality permeate the full range of our policies and practices:

- Equal opportunities;
- Pupils' progress attainment and assessment;
- Behaviour discipline and exclusions;
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- Teaching and learning;
- Induction;
- Admissions and attendance;
- The curriculum;
- All subjects;
- Teaching and learning;
- Staff recruitment and retention;
- Governor/staff training and professional development;
- Partnerships with parents/carers and communities;
- Visits and visitors.

Monitoring and Review

Brownedge St Mary's is a fully 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 learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential. We recognise that each person is a unique individual living through Christ.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils/students. 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 and initiate appropriate intervention strategies.

The types of performance data we collect and analyse are:

- CAT scores
- Key Stage 2 SAT results
- Fischer Family Trust Estimates for Key Stage 4
- Internal assessment levels across both key stages
- Estimated grades at Key Stage 4

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, both permanent and suspensions and internal inclusion data
- Racism, disabilism, sexism, 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 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. Monitoring will include safeguarding indicators set out in KCSIE 2025, including persistent or unexplained absence, and the provision of appropriate support for pupils who may be questioning their gender.

Ethos and Atmosphere

At Brownedge St Marys Catholic High School, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. As a Catholic School with a clear, inclusive Christian Mission.

- There should be an ‘openness’ of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored;
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through daily collective worship or assemblies or planning of assemblies, free access to the chapel for mass/private prayer/meditation or chaplaincy team. Opportunities are available to all within our sacramental programmes within our parishes, feast days and Holy Days of Obligation activities and retreats or enrichment visits off-site.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Pupil and Parent Surveys; Observation of Form and Assembly Time	Pupil and Parent satisfaction is high; Form Time and Assemblies cater for diversity of pupils and their varied spiritual needs	Designated member of SLT Governors’ Ethos Committee

Curriculum

The school seeks to ensure that its curriculum is personalised to the needs and aspirations of all pupils. Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles. All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression. Some setting is in place to help teachers match learning more readily to learners and is configured to allow pupils to move sets as appropriate without

detriment to other subjects. Expectations for all pupils should be appropriately high so that self-esteem in those who experience disadvantage is nurtured at all times. The rights of the weakest are the same as the academically brightest. Staff must reinforce this right in the language they use. Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity. Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality.

Teaching in RSHE will reflect DfE 2025 requirements: the legal definition of biological sex will be taught accurately; gender identity will not be presented as fact; and content will include strengthened guidance on family diversity (including same-sex parents), misogyny, and violence against women and girls.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Performance Management Parent Voice Pupil Voice	Pupil outcomes (progress and attainment) for groups show that any gaps are closing	Heads of Faculty/Subject Leaders Governors' School Standards Committee

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake at Brownedge to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners
- Use first language effectively for learning

Rewards and Sanctions

All pupils must be able to access rewards starting with verbal praise, moving through positives and leading to school prizes. The reward system is designed to reward good effort and improvement as well as attainment thus allowing all pupils, whatever their starting points to acquire praise and reward.

Sanctions, when they are issued, should always be issued in the spirit of justice and fairness. (See Rewards and Sanctions Policy)

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Pupil data on exclusion and behaviour records in SIMS and Talaxy	Groups are not disproportionately represented in behaviour records; "re-offending" rates show improvement Under-represented groups access rewards in line with other groups	Designated member of SLT Heads of House Governors' School Standards Committee

Bullying (To be read in conjunction with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy)

All pupils are entitled to an education that fulfils the ECM outcomes: That is:

- They are safe (and happy)
- They can participate, enjoy and succeed

- They learn how to enter employment and lead full and fulfilling lives as caring citizens

Part of this education will be about learning about and engaging with individuals who are different and realising that difference is to be celebrated.

Where pupils are singled out and harassed because of their difference this will be interpreted by school as a form of bullying and will be centrally recorded in line with the latest DfE regulations. These include racist, homophobic and disability bullying.

Staff are equally entitled to the same protections. Harassment of staff/workplace bullying is completely contrary to the ethos of the school. (See Staff Code of Conduct and Whistle blowing Policies)

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Bullying Record Pupil and Parent views	Levels of all kinds of bullying are low Pupil and Parent satisfaction is high	SMT (responsible for bullying in school) Governors' School Standards Committee

Racial Incidents (To be read in conjunction with the school's Anti-Racism Policy) are recorded and monitored centrally in line with DfE regulations.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Record of Racist Incidents	Levels of racist incidents are low and there is evidence of positive impact of any intervention	Designated member of SLT Governors' School Standards Committee

Employment of Staff

The Governors are equal opportunity employers and are committed to ensuring that, within the framework of the law, the School is free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation (including gender re-assignment and gender identity), religious belief or disability. All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.

The Governors aim to ensure that all staff can achieve their full potential and that all employment decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. Within the following we set out how to achieve these aims.

Employment practices will reflect the 2024 amendments to the Equality Act, including protection against discriminatory recruitment statements (even when no active recruitment is underway), explicit protection for breastfeeding employees, strengthened protections connected to pregnancy and maternity on return to work, and recognition of indirect discrimination by association.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Monitoring of recruitment of staff	Appointments follow fair application of criteria and the workforce represents this in its diversity	HT and Business Manager Governors' Resources and Finance Committee

Appointments

Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Selection procedures will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are appropriate for achieving the School's objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

Advertisements and job specifications will all carry a statement that this School is an Equal Opportunities employer. People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment. The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have, or have had, a disability will be reviewed to ensure that whatever possible reasonable adjustments are made to allow them to enter into, or remain in, School employment. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff can participate fully.

Person and job specifications shall be limited to those requirements which are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and personal or home commitments will not form part of employment decisions, except where necessary. Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only, i.e. skills, qualifications and experience in selection for recruitment.

Recruitment materials and public statements will not indicate a preference or aversion related to protected characteristics; such discriminatory recruitment statements are unlawful even outside an active hiring process.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Monitoring of recruitment of staff	Appointments follow fair application of criteria and the workforce represents this in its diversity	HT and Business Manager Governors' Resources and Finance Committee

Staff Development

All staff has a right to equality of opportunity. All staff has a duty to implement this policy. All employees should have equal chances of training, career development and promotion. All recruits to the School will be offered induction training, which will include a reference to the School's equal opportunities policy.

Staff development opportunities will be monitored and information presented to the governors as requested. Appropriate training will be provided, where necessary, to enable staff to implement and uphold this commitment to equality of opportunity.

Training needs will be assessed as part of the normal annual personal development review process. Working patterns will be reviewed, when necessary, so as to enable flexible working by staff with carer and/or childcare responsibilities, where this is possible. Where necessary, special provision will be made for training for staff returning to work following a break for domestic reasons.

Staff development will include periodic training on updated Equality Act provisions, EHRC guidance (sex and gender reassignment), RSHE content requirements, and relevant safeguarding expectations.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Records of training/CPD	Staff Development will follow fair application of criteria Staff Views will confirm fair access to training and development	HT and Business Manager Governors' Resources and Finance Committee

Pupils and their Learning

Pupils should have equal access to the curricular programmes of study throughout each Key Stage, and non-compulsory courses, according to aptitude and ability. **All pupils, irrespective of ability or any protected characteristics will have high expectations from staff in terms of work and behaviour.**

Analysis of attainment, progress and (behaviour) of pupils will be at pupil level and will seek to identify **and remedy** the under-performance of groupings within school such as gender, ethnicity, EAL, SEN and FSM and CLA. All subjects will aim to have equality of opportunity at their core.

School behaviour rules for students will clearly forbid the verbalisation or vocalisation of discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality, sexual identity and ability/disability or any other category listed at the top of this plan. This equally applies to staff whom through the Whistleblowing Policy have a duty to report occasions where the Code of Conduct in this respect has been broken. Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity will be fostered through the Learning for Life programme, RE, Assemblies, and tutor programmes.

School Uniform

In line with the most recent guidance, our uniform is gender neutral. This means boys and girls can wear the same uniform. That is girls can wear trousers and boys can wear a skirt if they wish. However, skirts must be the approved and badged skirt from our supplier. PE kit will also have the same freedoms.

Language

We recognise that it is important at Brownedge St Marys Catholic High School that all members of the school community will use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;
- Is not derogatory or does not offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem;
- Uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals e.g. Inuit rather than Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians.

Requests regarding names and pronouns will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with EHRC guidance, with decisions led by safeguarding, pupil welfare, and legal parental responsibilities.

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff will take account of disability needs, gender, religious and ethnic differences and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils;

- All pupils will be encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race;
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers will be given support as appropriate when they experience discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore where appropriate remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again;
- Positive role models will be used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community;
- Emphasis will be placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

How Monitored	Evaluation Measure	Who
Line Management of LfL, Citizenship and Form Time POD Records	Analysis of destinations Pupil Voice/Attitudinal Surveys	SMT (responsible for LfL etc) Governors' School Standards Committee

Disciplinary

Breach of the equal opportunity policy is a potentially serious disciplinary matter for both pupils and staff. Similarly, unsubstantiated accusations of discrimination for malicious purposes could be a serious disciplinary offence. Anyone who believes that they may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the Parental Complaints Procedure or the Staff Grievance Procedure.

Wider School Policies

The Equal Opportunities Policy should be read with regard to school policies on Code of Conduct, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Child Protection.