



Saint Jérôme
Church of England
Bilingual School

Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

Policy created:	September 2020
Policy reviewed and updated:	September 2026
Date of next full review:	September 2027
Review cycle:	Equality information: updated and published at least annually. Equality objectives: reviewed at least every 4 years. Whole scheme and action plans: reviewed annually (tightened from the original 3-year cycle, which was not followed; the 2020 version went 6 years without any review).
Linked policies:	SEND and Inclusion Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour for Flourishing Policy, Complaints Policy, Whistle-Blowing Policy, Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Version history

Date	Version	Summary of changes
September 2020	V1	Original scheme. Incorrectly treated the pre-2010 Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Gender Equality Duty 2006 as separately current duties; these were in fact repealed and consolidated into the Equality Act 2010 before this policy was even written. Chair of Governors signature was left as 'TBC' and never completed. Never reviewed despite a stated 3-year cycle.
September 2026	V2	Full review following DfE Regions Group correspondence (ref CI-0396675 / CI-0392641). Corrected the legal framework: replaced references to repealed pre-2010 legislation with the Equality Act 2010's nine protected characteristics, and separated the Public Sector Equality Duty's two distinct publishing clocks (equality information annually, equality objectives every 4 years), both of which were significantly overdue. Added the protected characteristics missing from the 2020 version: age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and religion or belief. Reflected the Supreme Court's April 2025 ruling in <i>For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers</i> , which held that 'sex' under the Equality Act 2010 means biological sex; gender reassignment remains a separate, fully protected characteristic in its own right, unaffected by that ruling. This update states the legal position only; any practical or facilities implications are a matter for the Governing Body to consider separately. Updated governance titles and named individuals; tightened the review cycle to annual.

Headteacher *Kate Schutte*

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(Kate Schutte)

Co-Chairs of Governors: Approved by Governors on 17th September 2026

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(Vas Lappas and Edward Stowell)

1. Introduction and Legal Framework

'Equality' means ensuring everyone can participate in all our activities on an equal footing. 'Diversity' acknowledges there are differences between people which should be recognised, respected and celebrated. This scheme sets out St. Jérôme Church of England Bilingual School's strategy for meeting its equality duties and responding to current legislation.

This scheme has regard to the following legislation and current guidance:

- The Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 1 October 2010 and consolidated previous anti-discrimination law, including the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005, into a single Act
- The Public Sector Equality Duty, in force from 5 April 2011, which requires the school to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, which require the school to publish equality information at least annually, and equality objectives at least every 4 years
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015, in relation to the Accessibility Plan
- The Supreme Court's judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16, which held that references to 'sex' in the Equality Act 2010 mean biological sex. Gender reassignment remains a separate protected characteristic in its own right, and is unaffected by this ruling.

The Equality Act 2010 establishes nine protected characteristics, on the grounds of which it is unlawful to discriminate against a person: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This scheme addresses all nine; the 2020 version of this document did not explicitly address age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, or religion or belief, and has been updated accordingly.

This scheme should be read in conjunction with the following documents, available on request from the school office: School Development Plan, SEND and Inclusion Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour for Flourishing Policy, Complaints Policy, and Whistle-Blowing Policy.

2. Mission Statement

At St. Jérôme Church of England Bilingual School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, whatever their protected characteristics 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 able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils is monitored by race, gender, disability and socio-economic background. We use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes, and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, to be respected and celebrated by all who learn, teach and visit here.

3. Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

A. Teaching and Learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve how we support individuals and groups of pupils
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender, disability and socio-economic background, and act on any gaps
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning future learning and setting challenging targets
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community, without stereotyping
- Promote attitudes and values that challenge racist, homophobic and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice

- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of others
- Seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues
- Use teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for, and inclusive of, the whole school population.

B. Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic or socio-economic factors. Exclusions are always based on our Behaviour for Flourishing Policy. We closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact, and ensure any discrepancies are identified and addressed.

4. Equal Opportunities for Staff

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. All staff appointments and promotions are made on merit and ability and in compliance with the law. As an employer, we strive to eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across our workforce.

Protected characteristics, including gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief, are considered when appointing staff and allocating responsibilities, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include monitoring recruitment and retention, including bullying and harassment of staff; continued professional development opportunities for all staff; and Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

5. The Nine Protected Characteristics

The following sets out how this scheme addresses each of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Age

We ensure fair treatment of staff and applicants regardless of age, in recruitment, promotion, training and retirement, in line with employment law.

Disability

A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes people with conditions such as HIV, multiple sclerosis, and cancer from the point of diagnosis. We promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others; eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability; promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; encourage participation in school life by disabled people; and take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even where this requires more favourable treatment. Our Accessibility Plan, at section 13, sets out our specific actions to increase access to education for disabled pupils. This section should be read alongside our SEND and Inclusion Policy.

Gender Reassignment

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process to reassign their sex. This is a distinct protected characteristic from sex (see below), and pupils and staff with this characteristic are fully protected from discrimination and harassment related to it.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

This characteristic protects staff (it does not apply to pupils) from discrimination because they are married or in a civil partnership.

Pregnancy and Maternity

We ensure that pregnant staff and staff on maternity leave are not treated unfairly, and that pregnant pupils, or pupils who are parents, are supported to continue their education.

Race

We continue to: eliminate racial discrimination; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations between people of different racial groups. We assess the impact of our policies and action plans on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity, including the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups.

Religion or Belief

As a Church of England school, we welcome pupils and staff of all faiths and none, in line with our Christian ethos of hospitality. We do not discriminate against staff or pupils on the basis of religion or belief, including the absence of religious belief, and we support pupils to understand and respect the religious and non-religious beliefs of others, in line with our Collective Worship Policy and RSE Policy.

Sex

We eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex, and promote equality of opportunity between men and women. In line with the Supreme Court's judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16, references to 'sex' in this scheme, and in our arrangements for any single-sex spaces or activities, mean biological sex. This is a distinct question from gender reassignment (above), which remains fully protected in its own right.

Sexual Orientation

We do not discriminate against staff or pupils on the basis of sexual orientation, and we promote understanding and respect for people of all sexual orientations, in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

6. Community Cohesion

The Education Act 2002, as amended, places 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 and beliefs, and socio-economic backgrounds. We promote this through our curriculum, Collective Worship, and links with our local community and parish.

7. Consultation and Involvement

The development of this scheme and the actions within it are informed by the input of staff, pupils, parents and carers, through:

- Discussion at Senior Leadership Team meetings
- Staff meetings and INSET
- Feedback from the School Council, whole-school surveys, and PSHE lessons
- Discussions at annual reviews
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings
- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evenings, and parent-school forum meetings
- Issues raised in annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans, SEN Support Plans, and Provision Maps.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equality in this scheme and continues to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils and responsive to their needs. The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on any protected ground; takes reasonable steps to ensure the school environment gives access to disabled people; and strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

The Headteacher and SENDCO

- Maintain continuity of the school's Equality Scheme and Action Plans, supported by the Governing Body
- Ensure all staff are aware of the Equality Scheme and Action Plans, and that they are applied fairly in all situations

- Ensure appointment panels give due regard to this scheme
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promote respect for others and equal opportunities to participate in school life
- Treat all incidents of unfair treatment, bullying or discrimination with due seriousness.

All Staff

- Ensure all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and maintain awareness of this scheme
- Provide material that gives positive images based on protected characteristics, and challenges stereotypes
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice or discrimination, and record serious incidents, bringing them to the attention of the Headteacher
- Support colleagues to intervene positively against discriminatory incidents.

9. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment because of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment. All staff are expected to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping, and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Discriminatory incidents are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher, Phase Leader, Deputy Head and Headteacher where necessary. Incidents are reported to the Headteacher, and racist and other discriminatory incidents are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Harassment on the grounds of a protected characteristic, 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, following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, as any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Responding to and Reporting Incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. The member of staff present challenges and deals with the incident; a response is given to the victim and family, and to the perpetrator and family; action is taken to address the issue with the perpetrator, victim, class, year group or school as necessary; and the incident is recorded on an incident form, passed to the Deputy Head for monitoring purposes. Where an incident is not resolved, it is referred to the class teacher and then to a senior member of staff for further investigation, with a full incident report completed and filed. Incidents are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

An incident is deemed resolved if no further complaint or issue is raised; in line with our Complaints Policy, it is normal to contact the person who reported the incident shortly after resolution to confirm they are satisfied.

British Values and Extremism

The DfE requires schools to create and enforce a clear expectation on promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Any cases of suspected or possible extremism should be reported to the Headteacher for investigation, in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Review of Progress and Impact

This scheme has been agreed by our Governing Body. We review progress against our equality information at least annually, review our equality objectives at least every 4 years, and review the entire scheme and accompanying action plans annually. We regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender, disability and socio-economic background to ensure all groups of pupils make the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

11. Publishing the Plan

To meet our statutory requirements to publish this Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan, we will: publish the plan on the school website; raise awareness of it through the school newsletter, assemblies and staff meetings; make copies available in alternative formats where requested; and ensure hard copies are available from the school office.

12. Equality Action Plan

Strand	Action	How impact is monitored	Responsible	Timeframe
All	Publish and promote the Equality Scheme and plans through the school website, newsletter and staff meetings.	Question about parent awareness in the annual survey.	Headteacher	Autumn term, annually
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender, disability and socio-economic background; act on any trends requiring additional support.	Achievement data analysed at Pupil Progress Meetings; support in place where needed.	Headteacher and Phase Leaders	Termly
All	Ensure the curriculum and Collective Worship reflect the diversity of our school community, including race, gender, sexuality and disability.	Curriculum planning, RSE Policy, and Collective Worship planning reviewed.	Headteacher and SLT	Ongoing
All	Ensure displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity, including languages spoken in the school and Francophone culture.	Increase in pupil participation, confidence and positive identity.	Class teachers	Ongoing
All	Ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to school life, e.g. School Council, class assemblies, fundraising.	School Council representation and participation monitored.	Headteacher	Ongoing
Race	Identify, respond to and report racist incidents, and report figures to the Governing Body termly.	Governing Body assesses whether responses are reducing incidents and whether pupils and parents are satisfied.	Headteacher / Governing Body	Termly reporting
Sexual orientation	Identify, respond to and report homophobic incidents, and report figures to the Governing Body termly.	As above.	Headteacher / Governing Body	Termly reporting
Religion or belief	Celebrate faith and cultural events through the year to build pupil understanding of different communities and increase opportunities to visit places of worship of other faiths.	Discussions with children, planning and pupils' work reflect a range of faiths.	RE Co-ordinator / class teachers	Ongoing

13. Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan increases access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Area	Action	Responsible	Timeframe
Curriculum participation	Maintain access to assistive technology; continue staff training on communication, autism and other learning needs; ensure the curriculum is appropriately differentiated; make alternative arrangements for trips and extra-curricular activities so all pupils can take part.	Headteacher, SENDCO, all staff	Ongoing
Physical environment	Maintain visual materials and signage; maintain quiet spaces with low visual and auditory stimuli for pupils with sensory needs; ensure steps and stairwells remain clearly marked for visually impaired members of the community.	Premises Manager, SENDCO, class teachers	Ongoing, reviewed annually
Information delivery	Ensure written information to parents and pupils is available in alternative formats on request; consider language and communication needs when scheduling events attended by parents and the wider community.	Headteacher, school office	Ongoing

14. Self-Evaluation Questions for Staff and Governors

- Is pupil achievement analysed by protected characteristic and socio-economic background? Are there trends requiring action, and has action been taken?
- How has this scheme been shaped by the views of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is information on protected characteristics used to inform policies, plans, lessons, additional support and training?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand issues related to protected characteristics?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life, and do those who make a positive contribution reflect the school's diversity?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by protected characteristic, and is this used to improve the experience of others? Are racist and other discriminatory incidents reported to the Governing Body termly?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of the school community?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors? Are events for parents and the community held in accessible parts of the school, with language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered when publishing and sending out information?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?