

Chorley, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

EQUALITIES POLICY



November 2024

Next review November 2028

**CHORLEY ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL AND NURSERY
EQUALITIES POLICY**

Background

The requirements of the Equality Act have been introduced incrementally since October 2010. In April 2011 the general public sector duty came into force and in April 2012 schools had the specific duty to publish information and the specific duty to publish objectives.

The primary purpose of the legislation is to bring together existing equalities legislation. Primarily these are the Equal Pay Act of 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act of 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments of recent years protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. It also builds on the 2006 Equality Act which instigated the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The 2010 Act imposes equality duties in respect of each of the equality strands (now called protected characteristics).

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The schools' provision of the act prohibits schools from discriminating against, harassing or victimising:

- Prospective pupils
- Pupils at school
- In some limited circumstances, former pupils

Note: Age and being married or in a civil partnership are not protected characteristics for the schools' provision.

Schools also have obligations under the Equality Act as employers, bodies which carry out public functions and service providers. In this instance all the protected characteristics need to be taken into account.

In the past there have been exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools and these are all replicated in the new act – such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions to single sex schools and schools of a religious character. Schools are obliged to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This duty establishes, in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, that public authorities are required to pay 'due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Equality Act; and
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. These are known as the three aims or arms of the '**general equality duty.**'

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others. The PSED is supported by specific duties.

The '**specific duties**' regulations require public bodies to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

1. Statement of Principles

Vision and values

Our mission at St Mary's is: With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow. In pursuing this mission, we aim:

- to be a loving and welcoming Christian family
- to enable all to achieve their full potential
- to be a caring community (to nurture a sense of belonging and to welcome and work in partnership with families, the parish and our wider and global community).

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school, this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, married or civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or any other recognised area of discrimination.

School Context

St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery is an average-sized voluntary aided primary School with 202 pupils on roll in YR - Y6 and in Nursery there are currently 24 children on roll. The school is a Catholic school under the Archdiocese of Liverpool and works to uphold its distinctive Christian ethos.

Socio-economic

The children at St Mary's school (YR-Y6) are mainly drawn from the school's immediate locality from wards ranging from A to E, according to the Overall Multiple Deprivation Index July 2024.

The pupil population taken as a whole is **average** in terms of deprivation, graded at **C**.

Ethnic heritage

From 2023/ 2024 data, a very large majority (89%) of pupils at St Mary's are classed as White British and a further 6% are of any other White background. Approximately 2% of children have Asian ethnicity (mixed White and Asian 0.5%) and 2% Mixed White and Black Black Caribbean and 1% Black British African. 9 learners (4%) were identified as having English as an additional language. This has been the typical ethnicity make-up of the school for the last four to five years.

Gender balance

From 2023/2024 data (LSIP autumn 2024) there are 109 boys (51%) and 103 girls (49%) in school.

Free School Meals %

The percentage of pupils eligible for FSM is approximately 4.2% (2023-2024 figures -LSIP autumn 2024) and is relatively low compared to the Lancashire average of 23.7% and national average of 24.9%. The percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium (including service premium) is approximately 8% which is low when compared to the local and national averages.

SEND % Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (July 2024)

	School % Nov 2024	Lancashire % (2023/2024)	Eng (2023/2024)
Accessing SEND provision (Educational Support Plans excluding statements/EHCPs))	6.9	12.6	14.1
EHCPs*	2.5	2.7	3.0
SEN	9.4	15.3	17.1

*there are an additional five EHCPs being processed (Nov 2024) which will bring total of EHCPs to 4.9%.

- At Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community
- There is an openness 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.

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 planning of collective worship, assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

2. Policy Development

This policy applies to the whole school community. It has been built upon the previous single equalities policy.

3. Monitoring and Review

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery is an 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 a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils/students:

For example, attainment data, attendance data, exclusions, complaints of bullying or harassment by ethnicity, disability, gender, free school meals (FSM).

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.

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 and truancy
- Racism, disabilism, sexism, homophobia and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extended learning opportunities e.g. representing the school in sports activities

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.

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the school improvement plan. The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and action plan is the headteacher.

Their role is to:

- Lead discussions, organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions
- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

4. Developing Best Practice

Learning and Teaching

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

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity;

- All subject areas, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

At Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we aim to ensure that:

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils
- Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- We place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability
- We will meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- We provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage.

Curriculum

At Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we aim to ensure that:

- 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

- 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

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community

Language

We recognise that it is important at Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- 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 accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age. We undertake responsibility for making contributions to extended learning opportunities and are aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines through the staff/volunteer induction policy.

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake at Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, 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
- Bilingual pupils are encouraged to use their first language effectively for learning.

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations). All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

This must include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible

We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which enables them to confidently carry out their roles and responsibilities in relation to equality.

Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds

Staff Recruitment

- 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
- Equalities practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices through induction.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

Note:

Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. An aided school may be able to rely on this for some roles in school, particularly those roles that provide spiritual leadership. However this would not apply for all staff in School. In addition, and there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational requirement on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be permissible, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

We will work with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.
- The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy.
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality.

6. Commissioning and Procurement

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

7. Publicising the Policy and Equality Objectives

This policy will be publicised on the school website. The equality objectives are addressed in appendix 1. Parents/carers and other interested parties may request a copy from the school office.

Annual Review of Progress

The specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty require our school: (a) to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and (b) to prepare and publish equality objectives. School has to update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years.

Review date: updated November 2024 – to be reviewed November 2028

Appendix 1 Equality Objectives Action Plan

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Equality Objectives 2024 - 2028

Objectives: 2024 - 2028	Actions / Tasks	Lead person	Other personnel	Intended Outcome and date (be specific-month or actual date not 'Autumn Term') objective will be completed	Person monitoring and how objective will be monitored including contribution by governors	External support/monitoring including: Adviser Consultant School to school support CPD/INSET
To promote Personal, Social Health Education with the effective implementation PSHE scheme of work – and ensure that pupils are educated in issues of equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE subject leader to access regular training in subject to support school for effective delivery of learning in PSHE PSHE leader to provide CPD and updates to staff. Ensure that PSHE curriculum promotes equality 	JN/PS	All staff	The children at St Mary's receive a rich and full PSHE curriculum which addresses issues of equality throughout.	Standards and effectiveness of the governing body.	LCC PSHE Consultancy
All children are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the life of the school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote and recruit vulnerable groups to participate in our pupil parliament, assemblies, prayer and liturgy, play leaders (Y5/6), House/ vice/ sports captains presentations and other extracurricular opportunities. 	JN/PS	All staff	All pupils have the opportunity to enjoy a role in and contribute towards the wider life of the school.	Standards and effectiveness of the governing body. E.g. discussion on participation in PE/ sports activities	LCC PSHE Consultancy

<p>To promote pupils' spiritual, social moral and cultural development through exposure to different religious beliefs and cultures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy into SLA with Pendle Faith Centre. • Arrange for visitors of different faiths and cultures to come and lead assemblies and carry out workshop across school. • Explore connected Classrooms programme to enable staff and children to make links with staff and pupils from another culture. 	<p>JN/ PS</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Pupils in our predominantly WBR populated school learn more about the diverse society that they live in. They are equipped with knowledge, skills and understanding that will assist them in a diverse and multicultural society.</p>	<p>Standards and effectiveness of the governing body.</p>	<p>School to school support, working with a cluster of local schools.</p>
<p>Respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents of prejudiced based incidents/behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the procedures for dealing with such incidents are established and widely understood and that staff and pupils are clear about their responsibilities 	<p>JN/ PS</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Use the data to assess the impact of the school's response to incidents – did the approach used lead to a decrease in incidents, are pupils and parents satisfied with the response?</p>	<p>Full governing board Headteacher's report.</p>	<p>School adviser</p>

<p>Evaluation (by Headteacher)</p>	<p>RED – not achieved AMBER – partly achieved GREEN – fully achieved</p>
<p>Next Steps (by Headteacher)</p>	<p>Use data autumn 2024 to determine to new objectives</p>

