

St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School



Equalities Policy

By Living our Values- We Shine!

“At St Mary & St Michael's we welcome all.

- ♥ We accept and celebrate uniqueness through love, care and compassion, serving all God's family.
- ♥ We respect each other and our aspirations.
- ♥ We nurture our faith and have the courage to forgive.
- ♥ We give everyone the opportunity to shine by working together in the warmth of our school community.
- ♥ We create a love for learning to allow us to achieve our dreams.”

Written Summer 2025

Agreed by Governors Summer 2025

To be reviewed: Summer 2026

The Aim of the Policy

Our Equality Policy reflects the values in our Mission Statement above.

Equality is a key principle of the British value of mutual respect and tolerance.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out specific duties that require public bodies to:

- publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and
- set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. We uphold the three aims of the [General Equality Duty](#), which are to:

- **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Duty are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality.
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. This means not simply treating everybody the same, but understanding and removing the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school. We want to celebrate and value the achievements and strengths of all pupils, staff, parents, our Governing Body and the wider community with whom we work and live alongside.

Our School Context

We are a small Catholic school and proudly express our beliefs whilst welcoming children and families from a range of religious and ethnic backgrounds. The majority of our pupils have English as their first language but children who have English as an additional language (EAL) are

supported to make the best possible progress and additional resources are given to help their families feel part of school community. We also provide continuous Wrap-around-care through the Children's Club, where the aims of this policy are also applicable.

The governing body and staff are aware of the ethnic groups within school, the languages our children and families speak and cultural enrichments that this can bring to our community. Details of these records are carefully held through our Management Information System. These have been shared with us from the families and are entered into the annual census collection data. We build relationships with our families so that we know their backgrounds. This helps to ensure that children and families are treated fairly and can be supported in whatever ways are needed.

The school is physically accessible for all and we improve our facilities and building whenever possible. (See our Local Offer on the School website and our Accessibility Plan)

The Ethos of Our School Community

Through our Catholic values, 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. Each of us should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. The different needs of people from protected groups are protected where necessary. All children and staff are encouraged to take a full part in school life especially where some protected groups are disproportionately low.

At St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly.

Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through the delivery of the Religious Education Curriculum, planning of assemblies, opportunities for prayer and liturgy, classroom based and externally based activities.

We are building a school in which everyone is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential, including prospective and former pupils. Children are taught to be polite and friendly to each other and to visitors. The school environment is kept clean and welcoming with high quality displays which reflect diversity in our society. Our curriculum is a values driven curriculum rooted in Catholic Values and the Bishop's vision for all Catholic schools. Alongside this, British Values and those key areas which staff and all collaborative parties agree, are vital to growing a whole person.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection (November 2021) reported:

Leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect the differences between people. They learn about other cultures and religions. Pupils learn about the school's 'Blue badge' values, such as respect, acceptance and forgiveness, which are taught through the curriculum. As a result, they are well prepared to live in modern Britain. The leadership team of the school demonstrates mutual respect between all members of the school community. Everyone is empowered and has the responsibility to challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour.

The Development of our Policy for Equality

This policy applies to the whole school community. It has been drawn up through consultation with staff and governors.

Each weekly staff meeting prioritises well-being of all members of the school community so that concerns about individual or groups of children can be shared, noted, addressed and monitored. Staff are encouraged to care for one another and to approach the headteacher with any concerns they have for themselves and for each other. These concerns may arise from protected characteristics or changes in other factors which affect us. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children's teacher or the Head Teacher whenever they have concerns which can affect their child's well-being and learning. This includes the wider circumstances of the family.

Monitoring and Review

St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We collect and analyse information that can inform us about our equality standards for our pupils such as attainment, attendance, exclusions, and any complaints of any kind of bullying or harassment, disability, sexism, homophobia and racism. We can then improve our inclusive practice and address any discrimination faced by members of protected groups and the wider school community.

Assessments

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track the progress of individual children, pupil cohorts and pupil groups as they move through the school. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans and map resources allocated to making achievement possible for all our children. The governing body, through the facilitation of a Curriculum Standards and Effectiveness committee oversees pupil performance. School performance data 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. Any changes to teaching and learning can then be made with resources allocated and training given so that all groups of pupils are enabled to make the best possible progress.

Through a rigorous self evaluation process, approved by the Governing Body and The School Adviser, all major groups of learners are analysed by ethnicity, disability, gender, free school meals (FSM), English as an additional Language (EAL) and the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG). Pupil progress meetings are held termly.

Our School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We 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.

At St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School we collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff through our safer recruitment processes. This is viewed in confidence by the Governing Body and care is taken to comply with GDPR.

The Employment Duty within the legislation states all schools should collect information on staff in post, and applicants for employment, training and promotion. This is deemed to be best practice in order to identify potentially discriminatory practice. We follow and uphold all practices outlined by the Catholic Education Service which ensures equitable appointment and recruitment processes. The information is updated annually and recorded on the school workforce census. The information alters annually dependent on what is required by the DFE.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Improvement Plan. The Head Teacher and Governors monitor and evaluate this plan. Their role is to:

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

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 through the purchase of supportive resources shared with children and families.
- 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
- Develop online platforms to support home-learning which families and staff can access easily and enjoy
- Provide a range of quality ideas and resources to support home learning particularly for families with less internet access or devices or parental time

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. Children are taught to encourage one another. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light. The reality of national tests is acknowledged and children are taught to do their best in tests but understand this in the context of their current age and the context of the tests.

- 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
- The school places a 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
- The school provides 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
- Positive attitudes to gender, race and religion are promoted and stereotypical representations of people are avoided
- Consideration and care is given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

Curriculum

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

- Our curriculum 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

Resources and Materials

At St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we aim to ensure that when ordering new resources and materials we consider how they show equality. The provision of good quality resources and materials 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 St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Primary School 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 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 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 non-staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake to make appropriate provision for all EAL 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 and support from the EMA Lancashire team will be sought.

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 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 either in the classroom as teachers or through provision of extra-curricular activities.
- 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.

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. One person on each panel is trained through 'Safer recruitment' processes delivered by LCC.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices.
- 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, 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 work with carers/parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- The setting up of, as part of the schools' commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of all stakeholders of the school community. This will be developed to support the school with matters related to its equality's duties.
- Where appropriate members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities
- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities.

Responsibility for the Equality Policy

At St Mary and St Michael's Catholic School

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.
- The head teacher 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 head teacher 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.

Commissioning and Procurement

St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. As part of the Property Group we are guided by Arcadis on this, which are a recognised company by Lancaster Diocese.

The Measurement and Impact of the Policy

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school.

Publicising the Policy

It is published on our school website. A copy is available in the staffroom and paper copies can be made available to families. The Policy is referred to in the Staff Handbook (from 2024).

The School Accessibility Plan is an action plan which outlines our goals and expectations in promoting the Equality Policy and is reviewed annually to take into account the effects of any changes made on all members of our school community. This is published on the school website.

Updates are reported regularly to the Governing Body especially the progress which the school makes to improve access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information.

The progress and performance in respect of this policy covering ethnicity, disability and gender is evaluated annually.

See Our Accessibility Plan for actions