

St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School



Equality Policy: January 2023

Background and Legal Framework

Over recent years schools have been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities and recognising their role in promoting an understanding of equality for different groups of people.

Much of this work is in response to legislation that places an increased duty within the specific context of a school's role in providing learning and other opportunities for all. It is about fairness, rights and justice. Inequality still persists in the UK despite 40 years of equality legislation. In Liverpool, we know some groups do less well than their peers in terms of progress, achievement and later life-chances. This picture is reflected nationally. The recognition of diversity and the promotion of inclusive and equitable practices will help to overcome this disparity.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- Equality Act Guidance for Catholic Schools – Catholic Education Service June 2014

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy:
- Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework.

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School also supports the single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the specific duties on public bodies including maintained schools and academies introduced by the Act. In carrying out our core purpose to educate our children, we will have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not

The Equality Act 2010 unified and replaced earlier legislation relating to equality of opportunity. The Act refers to 9 protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals and groups from discrimination on the basis of any of these protected characteristics.

This relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. St Vincent's Catholic Primary School will seek to achieve positive action in respect of the Act.

This policy includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community.

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School is further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes and respects the rights set out in the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our values relating to equality

St Vincent's Catholic Primary actively fosters a welcoming and respectful environment which allows us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that all children respect one another and behave with respect towards one another and that their parents/carers feel fully engaged in the school. We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the world communities. We support 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. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community.

We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the LA. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g. homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs.

Guiding Principles: We are guided by 8 principles:

- 1: All learners are of equal value
- 2: We recognise and respect difference
- 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development
- 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
- 6: We consult and involve widely
- 7: We address prejudice and prejudice-related bullying
- 8: Objectives – every 4 years (unless, after review, amendments/replacements are required) we formulate and publish specific and measurable equality objectives relating to informed, identified needs. (see Equality Information and Objectives document).

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors: The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and objectives are implemented. A member of the Governing Body has the role of monitoring the implementation of the policy.

Senior Leadership: The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support and for tasking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination or practices.

Staff: All staff are expected to:

- adhere to this policy
- promote equality and inclusion in their classroom, amongst pupils, colleagues and with visitors to the school
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver a curriculum that reflects our guiding principles
- provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of 'protected characteristic' groups and any issues that may arise, e.g. attendance, bullying, exclusion etc.
- undertake or support Equality Impact Assessment (equality analysis) processes
- attend appropriate training to keep up-to-date with equality issues

All staff and governors will have access to training and a selection of resources which discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion.

We value the opportunity to take an holistic approach in fulfilling our equality duties and all staff and governors will exercise their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of human rights is addressed immediately and appropriately.

Pupils will:

- be supported in their understanding of how this policy relates to them, appropriate to age and ability.
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy.
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy.

Parents/carers will:

- be encouraged, through accessible opportunities, to become involved in supporting the Policy.
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements.
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Policy, statement, information and objectives presented to full GB prior to its meeting on 27th March 2023.

Ratified by full GB E. M. Proffitt (Chair)

27th March 2023