

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL



School Equality Plan Policy (Incorporating Accessibility Plan)

STATUTORY POLICY

**THIS POLICY WAS REVIEWED/ADOPTED:
Spring 2020**

This Policy will be reviewed Spring 2024

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1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and Aims

1.1 School values

At St Joseph's Infant School, we aim to provide an education that develops both spiritual and the academic aspects of each individual. We celebrate through prayer, liturgy and worship allowing pupils and staff to develop and grow in their love of God. We foster Christian values in an environment which encourages the understanding of the needs of everyone and to be witnesses of Christ's values to the wider world. Furthermore, we continue to develop close relationships between home, school and parish.

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage and civil partnership. 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 will be monitored and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At St Joseph's Infant School, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

1.2 Characteristics of our school

St Joseph's Infant School is a Voluntary Aided Catholic School under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Menevia which serves the parishes of St Joseph's Our Lady of Margam and Our Lady of Assumption, Briton Ferry and funded as part of the Neath Port Talbot council provision.

The school provides a place for baptised Catholics within the servicing parishes. As the number of baptised Catholics has slightly declined (50%) the school has been able to extend its outreach to pupils from families of other denominations and faiths and for pupils whose families can support the ethos and want an education in a Church school.

In recent years, the school has had to face challenges therefore, of an increased and noticeably changed student body. There has been a trend of increasing numbers of pupils

with a variety of special needs including EAL. The number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds has increased and diversified.

1.3 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

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

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data according to the various protected characteristics and action any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for 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 in terms of the various protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils

1.4 Setting our equality objectives

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all learners, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

The school will ensure that it's policies and/or practices in the following areas are designed to ensure that no direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation with respect to the above and promote both equality of opportunity and good relations between staff, children and parents and also in its dealings with the wider community.

The purpose of our **Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with ‘protected characteristics’, and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our school plans and policies.

In setting the equality objectives for this school, we will take due regard to the Equality Act general duty:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this means
 - a. removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - b. taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - c. encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Our SEP and Equality Objectives are set in the light of:

- ***The regional equality objectives identified in Appendix 1;*** views expressed by our school council and governing body that have been involved in the development of the plan;
- issues arising as a result of our analysis of our pupil data, e.g. School Free Meals Data

The delivery of our SEP will contribute to all of our actions and commitments to:

- raise standards
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes for children and young people;
- improve outcomes as described within the Children and Young People Plan (CYPP);
- promote community cohesion

Our School Equality Objectives are set out in **Section 5 (p.10) and Appendix 2.**

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Governing Body

The governing body has set out its commitment to equality and diversity in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and

responsive to their needs based on the various protected characteristics. The governing body:

- seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school;
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils;
- ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school

In order to meet its reporting responsibility, the governing body will report on the progress of the SEP annually, as part of its Annual Report to parents.

2.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- implementing the school's SEP, supported by the governing body in doing so;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Act and are fully informed of our school's SEP and equality objectives,
- ensuring that all appointments' panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities;
- promoting the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promoting respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life;
- treating all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, according to the Authority's and school's policies

2.3 Staff – teaching and non-teaching

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of staff contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's SEP;
- striving to provide material that gives positive images based on the protected characteristics and challenges stereotypical images;
- challenging any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents as prescribed in the LA and school's policies, e.g. reporting of racial incidents;
- supporting the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

3. Information gathering and Engagement

3.1 Purpose and process

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in:

- deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community
- reviewing our performance.
- undertaking Equality Impact Assessments

Engagement is based on the information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. The reason that this progress is important is to understand the full range of needs of the school community.

3.2 Types of information gathered

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- children and young people's views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of enrichment activities by group;
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage;

3.3 Engagement

The school involves **stakeholders** including children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country.

The views of stakeholders and other equalities related groups are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

- We work closely with the LEA who provide support to staff, to ensure the preferred method of communication is available to parents and pupils with whom English is an additional language.
- We work closely and consult with parents of children who have Additional Learning Needs, and along with external multi-agency team support, we endeavour to provide inclusive education for all.
- Family Learning has been implemented for all families to support their own literacy, need to reword.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed plans and policies in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's plans and policies are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

As part of this school's compliance of the specific duties of the Act, we will continue to undertake impact assessment of all new policies and plans prior to them being implemented. Similarly, we will impact assess our existing policies and plans whenever they are reviewed. As such, impact assessments are incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of every policy.

Where impact assessments have been done, they will influence changes to policy and the review of the SEP itself.

5. Objectives and Action Plans

Our chosen Equality Objectives are :

1. Raising Standards for All pupils
2. Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among staff, parents, pupils and Governors.
3. Identify attendance trends

Further information on how we will achieve these objectives is contained in Appendix 1.

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the SEP on a regular basis, through the governing body and with Estyn when the school is inspected.

6. Publication and reporting

We will publish our SEP on our school website and make it available from the school office. It is accessible to all staff via our computer network. The Plan will be available in a range of formats on request.

The school reports annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the SEP itself on school ethos and practice within the school. This is undertaken as part of the Governors' Annual Report.

All data collected will be used solely for the purpose of analyzing trends by protected characteristic in performance, take-up and satisfaction with services offered by the school or local authority. Such information will be stored separately from personal information which identifies the individual. In order to protect the identities of individuals when trend information is published no counts containing less than 5 individuals will be published.

7. Monitor and Review

As part of our responsibility to monitor the SEP, we commit to:

- revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for our Equality Objectives
- undertaking an annual review of progress against our Equality Objectives.

We will undertake a full review of our SEP by Spring 2021.

Date:

Initial Policy Review Date to monitor review of Action Plan: Spring 2021.

St Joseph Infant School

Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024

Appendices

- App. 1 Regional Equality Objectives**
- App. 2 School Equality Objectives and Action Plan**
- App. 3 Current School Access Plan**

Regional Equality Objectives

1. Reduce Gaps in attainment between Boys and Girls and between other protected groups as identified in local data

National research indicates inequalities in the levels of attainment between genders, ethnicities and between disabled people and non-disabled people. Boys, black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils and disabled children all perform poorly on average compared to other groups.

2. Implement new Welsh Government Bullying Guidance and reduce Identity based bullying in schools

The All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools (WG 2009) found a range of identity based bullying in schools across Wales. Examples include 22% of year 6 pupils had been 'bullied in a homophobic way'; 7% of year 7 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to learning difficulties' and 3% of year 10 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to race or ethnic origin'.

3. Reduce gaps in levels of attendance between different protected groups as identified in local data

Work is currently underway to improve data analysis which can identify differences in attendance trends between groups of pupils with different protected characteristics. Several reports have been commissioned nationally which examine attendance of Gypsy Traveller and Irish Traveller children. Each found that attendance was lower among these children.

4. Reduce the number of NEETs

Wales has a higher proportion of people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) among the 16-24 year old group than England. Being NEET is a major disadvantage to young people.

5. Improve access to information and physical access to schools and other learning settings for pupils, parents and staff.

Head teachers and Governors need to be confident that all pupils can reasonably access services and are not unjustifiably disadvantaged by having any of the protected characteristics. Schools already have Disability Access Plans in place. However, schools and local authorities through the public sector equality duties need, to cater for the needs of all protected groups so the scope is wider than Disability Access Plans.

6. Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among Pupils, Staff and Governors.

None statutory guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duties states that 'a listed body in Wales (including all Schools) must make appropriate arrangements to promote knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties amongst its employees.' In the school context we wish to extend this to include pupils and Governors.

St Joseph's Infant School
Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024
Equality Objectives and Action Plan

Equality Objective:				
Raising standards for all pupils				
Associated actions required:				
Task	Responsible person	Deadline	Outcome (and its relation to the objective)	Progress update (this will be completed annually)
Year One to Four – 2020-2024				
Analysis of internal assessments Analysis of external examinations	Head Teacher /DH and Senior Management Team	Ongoing Analysis of Nat. Testing, End of KS, Incerts. March/May/June/Sept.	Standards continue to be raised for all pupils and all groups of learners	HT and DH carried out in depth analysis of -end of KS Assessments-INCERTs, -National Tests in Numeracy and Literacy. -Info disseminated to staff DH met with Data Gobs. Analysis of results.(Summer 2019).

St Joseph's Infant School
Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024
Equality Objectives and Action Plan

Equality Objective:				
Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among staff, parents, pupils and Governors.				
Associated actions required:				
Task	Responsible person	Deadline	Outcome (and its relation to the objective)	Progress update (this will be completed annually)
Year One to Four 2020-2024				
Publication of SEP plan on School Website.	Head Teacher and Senior Management Team.	Feb 2020	Knowledge and understanding actively promoted	Updated SEP to go live on website Feb 2020
Promotion of knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues.		Ongoing September		

Questionnaire to be sent asking for parents, staff and governors for opinions regarding equality.		March 2020 ongoing		
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St Joseph's Infant School
Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024
Equality Objectives and Action Plan

Equality Objective:				
Identify attendance trends				
Associated actions required:				
Task	Responsible person	Deadline	Outcome (and its relation to the objective)	Progress update (this will be completed annually)
Year One to Four – 2020-2024				
To improve data analysis which can identify attendance trends between groups of learners with different protected characteristics	Head Teacher and Senior Management Team.	February 2020/ongoing Ongoing-year on year	Standards continue to be raised for all pupils and all groups of learners	