

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, 207, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2NL**

# **Equality and Accessibility Plan and Policy (including Race Equality & Equal Opportunities)**

# **2017-2021**

This is a working document which will be monitored and reviewed annually.

## 1. Policy statement

- a) In accordance with our mission statement; “To live, love and learn in a caring Christian community”, we pledge:
- to respect the equal human rights of all our pupils;
  - to educate them about equality; and
  - to respect the equal rights of our staff, parents and other members of the community.
- b) We will assess our current school practices (“Equality Impact Assessment”) and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to:
- ethnicity,
  - religion or belief,
  - socio-economic background,
  - gender and gender identity,
  - disability,
  - sexual orientation, and
  - age.

See **Inclusion Policy** for further detail.

## 2. Statutory requirements

The equality objectives in Section 10 below address our duties under current equality legislation, up to and including the Equality Act 2010. They also relate to the Herts Council procedure for recording incidents involving pupils in schools.

The access plan in Section 11 below addresses our duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001.

This scheme also covers the statutory requirements outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework

## 3. Responsibilities

The Equality Duty Committee takes the lead, but the governors as a whole are responsible for:

- drawing up, publishing and implementing the school’s equality objectives
- publishing the policy and objectives on the school website
- making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation; and
- making sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed
- monitoring progress towards the equality objectives and reviewing annually with FGB

The head teacher is responsible for:

- making sure steps are taken to address the school’s stated equality objectives;
- making sure the equality and access plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them;
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;

- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out; and
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents.
- enabling reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, in regard to students, staff, parents / carers and visitors to the school.

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equality in their work;
- avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone;
- fostering good relations between groups; and
- dealing with prejudice-related incidents;
- being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

The Head Teacher is responsible overall for dealing with reports of prejudice-related incidents.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for following relevant school policy.

## **4. Staff development**

This section outlines our process for training and development in relation to equality and cohesion in terms of professional responsibilities as well as statutory requirements.

If training is available and requested, it will be slotted in to the Inset programme as part of the ongoing needs and development of staff as identified by the Head Teacher.

## **5. Publication and review**

This Equality Scheme fulfils statutory requirements under the terms of legislation referred to above. As it is a public document, the school governors publish it on the school website.

The scheme will be kept under annual review for four years and then replaced in Autumn 2021.

## **6. Reporting on progress and impact**

A statement will be published by the governors via the school website, flagged by the newsletter at the end of spring term each school year, i.e. 2018,2019,2020,2021.

## **7. How we conduct equality impact assessment and select our equality objectives**

This section outlines our process for monitoring the potential impact of school practice in terms of

- ethnicity,
- religion or belief,
- socio-economic background,
- gender and gender identity,
- disability,
- sexual orientation, and
- age.

Information is gathered from stakeholders to understand views on issues specifically relating to equality issues and these are used to develop our equality objectives. Monitoring will take place through Head Teachers reports and those of this committee. We will regularly communicate with parents and pupils about their perceptions of equality in school.

Information gathering:

- Specific equality questionnaires collecting views from parents, staff and governors are undertaken every 4 years to support development of a new Equality Plan
- Discussions between Head Teacher and upper KS2 pupils are undertaken to gather views and ensure children in each cohort have the ability to be involved in understanding equality issues

The results will highlight strengths and areas for development of our Equality Plan. This process will be evidenced through the minutes of the Equality Duty Committee's meetings.

Equality objectives identified by this process are included in the four-year plan in Section 9 below, and in the School Development Plan as appropriate.

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence from the equality impact assessments and data gathering listed above.

The evidence was then analysed in order to choose objectives that will:

- i. promote equality of opportunity for members of identified groups
- ii. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and
- iii. foster good relations between different groups in terms of
  - ethnicity,
  - religion or belief,
  - socio-economic background,
  - gender and gender identity,
  - disability,
  - sexual orientation and
  - age.

## 8. Equality Objectives 2017-2021

(To be kept under regular review)

### **Equality objectives (focused on outcomes rather than processes)**

*Prepare the children for the world they will be living in by ensuring the curriculum is rich and diverse and resources are available to meet that rich and diverse curriculum.*

[Research has been undertaken into a structured programme for PSHE within the curriculum and the SCARF (Coram) programme has been trialled in the school. The programme will be incorporated within the curriculum. March 2017]

[SCARF programme has been implemented and is being reviewed by Subject Leader with teachers. March 2018]

[The school is awaiting guidance from the Diocese on SRE (Sex and relationship education) curriculum due to commence with a policy in 2020. PSHE is now incorporated into the curriculum. It underlines the RE curriculum when thinking of the common good and thinking of others. Outdoor learning and Forest School enable the school to broaden the curriculum outside of the classroom and give the children experience of nature. March 2019]

*Provide sufficient communication to parents and carers in relation to the work that we do in school in relation to the Equality Duty factors in general.*

[The school newsletter will continue to be used to update parents on the work that we do in relation to Equality Duty. March 2017]

[We have ensured that our website has a high visibility option for pupils and adults. Equality Governors have continued to inform parents annually on progress made during the year. The website is regularly updated to inform parents of any changes. March 2018]

[The governors continue to communicate with parents with regard to Equality Duty throughout the year and produce an annual newsletter Report. March 2019]

*Continue work to equip the school so that it is user friendly for all, regardless of mobility or other limitations.*

[Focus on ensuring that there are appropriate facilities within the new school building to meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Hopefully these will include a storage area for wheelchairs, a lift, and a specific breakout/sensory area. This will be in accordance with the BB103 (building bulletin) latest guidance for accessibility. Disabled toilets should have adequate alarm systems. All governors and the Leadership Team will work with the architects to ensure that the new school build will have modern day facilities to meet the needs of all our pupils to increase

accessibility. March 2017; March 2018.]

[The new school building plans include storage for wheelchairs, a lift and an SEN room. There will be disabled toilets on both floors. As highlighted in the Positive Behaviour Policy there is provision for SEN pupils. March 2019]

*To enable our EAL and non-verbal children to fully access the learning environment and improve communication.*

[Any additional training for staff that would prove beneficial for the children and advice from appropriate outside agencies to enhance meeting their needs, in addition to that already used, will be considered. March 2017]

[Ongoing training from Speech and Language specialists and Special School Outreach services have enhanced our provision for pupils with S&L challenges. March 2018]

[There continues to be ongoing liaison with outreach services and there is a speech and language communication programme for the parents run by the school. March 2019]

*Uniform will be reviewed to ensure appropriateness and to make sure that any changes do not contravene the Equality Act.*

[Uniform was reviewed and changes implemented from January 2018 for girls to have the option to wear trousers in the Winter months. Further changes to the Summer uniform will be implemented from April 2018. March 2018.]

[Uniform changes were implemented and have been successful. March 2019]

## Access Plan 2017-21

This can relate very closely to the disability elements of the equality objectives in Section 8 above, except that it covers **pupils only** whereas the equality plan includes all members of the school community.

	<b>Actions (focused on outcomes rather than processes)</b>
i. Improvements in access to the curriculum	<p><b>Academic Years 2017-21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Monitor classroom practice and seek advice from relevant agencies when necessary in order to make suitable changes to ensure provision is inclusive for all children with special educational needs, disabilities and behaviour support e.g. autism, ADHD, Global Developmental Delay, dyslexia and dyscalculia.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Staff have acted and will continue to act on the advice of the speech and language therapist in enabling relevant pupils to access the curriculum.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Staff continue to attend training when this is needed and is available</i></li> </ul> <p>[Staff have acted on advice from the behavioural support team in relation to specific behavioural issues. STEPS: the Hertfordshire preferred behavioural management training, school wide. This is now reflected in the school Positive Behaviour Policy. March 2019]</p>
ii. Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services	<p><b>Academic Years 2017-21</b></p> <p><i>Plans are in place for a new school build where accessibility for all pupils to meet their needs will be highlighted.</i></p> <p>[Focus on ensuring that there are appropriate facilities within the new school building to meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Hopefully these will include a storage area for wheelchairs, a lift, and a specific breakout/sensory area. This will be in accordance with the BB103 (building bulletin) latest guidance for accessibility. Disabled toilets should have adequate alarm systems. All governors and the Leadership Team will work with the architects to ensure that the new school build will have modern day facilities to meet the needs of all our pupils to increase accessibility.]</p> <p>[The new school plans include storage for wheelchairs, a lift and an</p>

	SEN room. There will be disabled toilets on both floors of the school. March 2019]
iii. Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils	<p><b>Academic Years 2017-21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to provide visually impaired pupils printed materials in font 18+.</li> <li>▪ Provide written materials in alternative formats for pupils and parents, including translation services, as required.</li> <li>▪ To continue to use the school website which may be accessed by pupils to provide information and to ensure that this is dyslexia friendly and includes Google translate.</li> <li>▪ Implement 'Communication in Print' (visual support and guidance) for pupils needing further access to class instructions and school routines.</li> <li>▪ Employ a wireless hearing loop for pupils with hearing impairments.</li> </ul> <p>[Increased use of apps and programmes such as Team Viewer to assist pupils with a visual impairment and /or dyslexia. The other app the school has access to is RNIB Bookshare for children with a visual impairment. Relevant staff are trained annually on hearing support methods to use effectively for children with a hearing impairment. March 2019]</p>

## Appendix A

### Additional Equality Statements to be read in conjunction with published school policies

#### Pupils' attainment and progress

St Joseph's expects the highest possible standards. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and continually challenge them to reach higher standards.

St Joseph's recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse pupil performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any disparities which are identified will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.



## **The quality of provision - teaching and learning**

All staff ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Positive steps are taken to include pupils who may otherwise be marginalized.

We take account of pupils' experiences and starting points and are responsive to pupils' different learning styles. All pupils are regularly consulted about their learning.

Our teaching styles include collaborative learning. All pupils will be encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks. Pupils will be encouraged to be a resource for their peers.

Staff encourage pupils to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress. Assessments are analysed for gender, cultural and social bias, and where appropriate take account of access issues, e.g. print size.

## **The quality of provision - curriculum and other activities**

St Joseph's provides an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. We will monitor and evaluate its effectiveness through target setting and attainment analysis

All pupils participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls
- pupils learning English as an additional language
- pupils who are gifted and talented
- pupils with special educational needs
- pupils with a disability
- pupils who are in public care
- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- lesbian, gay or questioning young people

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra curricular activities and special events e.g. school productions, cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils

## **The quality of provision – guidance and support**

We actively promote good personal and community relations and recognise diversity as having a positive role to play within the school.

All staff are expected to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among boys and girls from all ethnic groups and range of abilities.

Staff challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

St Joseph's provides appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils are encouraged to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning

Victims of harassment and bullying are given appropriate support. The perpetrators are dealt with in line with school policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

## **Behaviour and Attendance**

St Joseph's expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils, appropriate for their developmental level.

It is recognised that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. Our school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Clear procedures are in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment, including racism and harassment related to disability, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with relevant Herts LA policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

All staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters

We encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this policy. Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all pupils.

St Joseph's will take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a pupil for a reason related to any disability they may have.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable.

St Joseph's will fully support children with long-term medical needs who may have an erratic attendance because they are in and out of hospital.

## **Partnership with pupils, parents, carers and the wider community**

We monitor parental involvement and have strategies to raise participation of under represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all.

Parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with special educational needs, understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action and are told about the parent partnership service when SEN is identified.

## **Leadership and management**

St Joseph's will not discriminate against a disabled pupil in the arrangements it makes for determining admission.

We will admit pupils with already identified special educational needs. Pupils with statements of special educational needs or EHCP's will be admitted in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in admissions forms OR gathered at admissions interview.

St Joseph's adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties and Herts County Council and Diocese guidelines.

We will take steps to encourage people from under represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored.

Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices

We will ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated in the induction programme for new staff.

The skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and the school strives to reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

St Joseph's opposes all forms of racism, homophobia, prejudice and discrimination.

Resources and displays in our school reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of St Joseph's

## **Linguistic Diversity**

We recognise and celebrate the linguistic diversity in British society. We look for opportunities to enrich the curricular experience of all our pupils by:

- highlighting how English has borrowed from other languages
- raising awareness of the similarities and differences between English and other languages
- reflecting the multilingual nature of wider society in our resources and displays