

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

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

2021-2025

2022/23 Review

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 current scheme was introduced in autumn 2021 and will be revised in the summer of 2025.

6. Reporting on progress and impact

A reviewed statement will be published by the governors via the school website annually.

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 2021-2025

(To be kept under regular review)

Equality objectives (focused on outcomes rather than processes)
<p>Create a sensory area to provide a sensory breakout space for SEND pupils</p> <p>21/22 Review: This action was agreed due to the lack of breakout spaces for SEND pupils, particularly those with high sensory needs. Good progress has been made on this action. The school worked with parents on the final designs of the room based on their experiences of their child and similar spaces they have used. Three quotes have been sought and the order placed. Costs are in the region of £6k in total which is primarily funded by the school Association. Installation has been booked for 31st August 2022.</p> <p>22/23 Review: The sensory room was successfully completed in the Autumn term and is being accessed for pupils with SEMH and social and communication disorders on a daily basis as part of our SEND provision.</p>
<p>Provide a quiet space for pupils on the playground.</p> <p>21/22 Review: This action came up as not all pupils enjoy a busy and loud play space. In addition, there was original limited space for seating in the playground. Following the completion of the outside building works, it was decided to make a greater playground space by extending artificial grass from the existing playground to the fence line. This has enabled a useable space all year round. A quiet prayer area has been designed in conjunction with the chaplaincy team which will provide a fenced area with benching, flower containers and outside prayer space with statue. Equipment has been ordered for installation during the Autumn Term 2022.</p> <p>22/23 Review: The resources for the outside prayer space were ordered during the year but due to delivery delays and other factors, installation was not able to be completed during this academic year.</p>
<p>Re-establish our Forest School</p> <p>21/22 Review: This action was needed due to the old forest school area having been removed due to the building project. The forest school enabled pupils to learn new skills whilst developing their social skills and develop their self-esteem in an environment outside of the classroom. Mr Dove has the Forest School accreditation.</p> <p>The new forest school area was chosen during the academic year and re-established. EYFS staff ensured the area was demarcated with fencing and have been taking classes in the area during the summer term. The school is going to continue to develop staff experience through training in the next academic year, as</p>

well as seeing good practice at St Thomas of Canterbury School who provide experience days with their developed Forest School.

22/23 Review: EYFS staff continued to develop our Forest school area during the year following visits to St Thomas of Canterbury. Staff through the school organised learning in the area. Due to staffing changes, a new member of staff will need to undertake forest school accreditation in 23/24. Other than that, this action is complete.

To provide seating area for parents wanting to breastfeed on the school Site

21/22 Review: This was a parent request as there were no facilities to easily sit down to breastfeed on the school site while waiting for the beginning or end of the school day. Following discussion with the committee, it was decided that a bench outside of the playground fencing perimeter would be most suitable for any parent requiring a place to sit, including those wishing to breastfeed.

22/23 Review: No further progress was made on this target during the year. The location of the bench outside of the school gates needs further review as it could be a security issue for vandals.

To ensure toilet facilities are suitable for pupils and meeting gender equality

21/22 Review: With the new building, toilets were designed to be unisex as they were all enclosed single units. Provision for sanitary bins needed to be assigned to a small number of toilets on the first floor pupil toilets. Through discussion with the pupils in Years 5 and 6, they decided that they wanted to continue with separate toilet blocks for boys and girls at UKS2. LKS2 toilets would be assigned to year groups but remain unisex.

22/23 Review: This action is now complete.

To ensure diversity within the RSE programme

21/22 Review: Feedback from one parent survey wanted to see more teaching and promotion of LGBTQ+ sexuality within the RSE curriculum. Feedback from a different parent strongly disagreed with any LGBTQ+ reference within school and for it to be actively taught as immoral and sinful. The school is just ending its first year of teaching and implementing the Diocesan approved RSE curriculum. Monitoring of the curriculum has shown positive learning experiences across the school.

22/23 Review: The Diocesan approved RSE curriculum has now been taught for a second year throughout the school. Feedback from lesson monitoring and pupils voice has been positive.

Access Plan 2021-25

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.

	Actions (focused on outcomes rather than processes)
i. Improvements in access to the curriculum	<p>Academic Years 2021-25</p> <p>To ensure that all cover staff, including supply teachers are aware of additional needs of pupils and how to support them</p> <p>To reduce the attainment gap between SEND and non SEND pupils. To ensure progress is as good as those pupils Nationally with SEN</p> <p>To continue to provide staff training to support pupils with disabilities including SEMH, ASD, PDA</p> <p>Review SEND provision and provision mapping within the school</p>
ii. Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services	<p>Academic Years 2021-25</p> <p>To provide additional seating area for pupils who need a quiet space</p> <p>To provide a sensory room to help pupils to regulate more effectively</p> <p>To review signage and markings etc are still visible and clear around the school site</p>
iii. Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils	<p>Academic Years 2021-25</p> <p>To ensure paper copy of the Local offer and School Information report is available</p> <p>To ensure information is available in a variety of formats, as required</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 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