

We believe that with God, everything is in our reach.

St Francis RC Primary School



Equality Policy

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Date agreed by Governing Body	September 2025
Review Date	September 2026

Introduction and Rationale

As a Catholic school, the dignity of every person is a fundamental principle. We cherish the diversity of the world in which we live, and see this diversity as a gift that enriches our school community. We embrace our Christian values as a foundation for promoting social justice, compassion, and inclusion.

Our Inclusive Culture

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion, equity and respect, where every pupil, staff member, parent, carer, and visitor feels valued, safe and able to participate fully in school life. This commitment is aligned with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), ensuring that we promote equality across all areas of school life.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy outlines the school's approach to ensuring equality and eliminating discrimination in line with our statutory responsibilities. It defines our strategic commitment to removing barriers, tackling inequality, and advancing equality of opportunity and positive relationships within our school community. The policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Legal Framework - Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates over 116 pieces of legislation into a single Act. It provides protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on nine protected characteristics:

- Age (relevant to staff, governors, and visitors)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (employment only)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

In line with Section 149 of the Equality Act, public bodies, including schools, must:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

- Foster good relations between different groups

Schools must:

- Publish information each year to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective every four years

Equality Principles

We are guided in our work by the following principles:

Equal Value and Dignity: Every individual is of equal value and is entitled to be treated with respect and fairness, regardless of background or identity.

Respect for Difference: Equality does not mean treating everyone the same. We respond to individual need by removing barriers and making reasonable adjustments where required.

British Values: We actively promote democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Positive Attitudes and Relationships: We encourage respectful and inclusive interactions. Discriminatory behaviour or language is never tolerated.

Equality in Employment and Staffing: We recruit, promote, and support staff equitably in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and DfE guidance on staffing in schools.

Addressing Inequality and Removing Barriers: We are committed to identifying and removing any physical, structural, cultural or curricular barriers to equality of access and achievement.

Consultation and Participation: We involve stakeholders, particularly those from protected groups, in shaping our policies and practice.

Preventing Bullying and Prejudice: We follow DfE guidance (*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, 2017) to address bullying, prejudice and discriminatory incidents effectively.

Fostering Social Cohesion: We foster a strong sense of belonging and community within and beyond our school.

Implementation

Curriculum and Teaching

Our curriculum reflects and respects diversity. Across all subjects, particularly PSHE, RSE (in line with DfE statutory guidance 2019), and RE, pupils learn about different cultures, identities, faiths, and the principles of equality. Materials and teaching are free from stereotypes, and actively promote inclusive citizenship.

Behaviour and Exclusions

Our Behaviour Policy upholds the principles of equality, and reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with SEND. We monitor data on behaviour, exclusions, bullying, and attendance across different pupil groups and act quickly to address overrepresentation or patterns of concern.

Data Collection, Monitoring and Planning

We collect data (as identified in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, 2023) relating to:

- Gender and ethnicity
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Pupil Premium eligibility
- Looked After Children
- EAL (English as an Additional Language)
- Attendance, exclusion and attainment

Accessibility

We meet duties under the Equality Act through our Accessibility Plan, which sets out how we will:

- Improve access to the curriculum
- Improve access to the physical environment
- Improve access to communications in alternative formats for pupils, parents, and staff with disabilities

Employment and Recruitment

We ensure fairness in recruitment, retention and progression. Recruitment panels receive appropriate training, and all job applicants are treated fairly and objectively. Staff induction includes a focus on equality and diversity.

Ongoing Professional Development

We ensure that all staff are equipped to uphold principles of equality. Training includes:

- Inclusive teaching strategies
- Managing and reporting equality incidents

Engagement with Parents and the Wider Community

We ensure all parents feel welcomed and informed, and promote our equality values through the school newsletter, website, displays, and events.

Publication of Equality Information/Policy Review Cycle

In line with the Equality Duty, information is published annually on the school website to show how we are meeting our obligations.

This policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner if required due to amendments in legislation or following consultation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure compliance with equality legislation
- Approve and monitor implementation of this policy and equality objectives

Headteacher

- Lead on promoting and embedding this policy
- Ensure staff are trained and systems are in place to record and report incidents
- Oversee the use of data to identify and reduce disparities

All Staff

- Understand their responsibilities to protect and promote equality
- Challenge discrimination and implement inclusive practices
- Take part in training and ongoing development

Pupils

- Respect and value all people
- Report any form of discrimination or inequality
- Take part in activities that foster understanding and community

Equality Objectives

1. To continually monitor and analyse pupil engagement in learning and school life and act on areas of concern to ensure equality of opportunities for all pupils.
2. To narrow gaps in attainment and progress that arise between groups of pupils. To ensure that all groups and individuals have their needs fully met in order to be the best they can be, and to make good progress or better – knowing more and remembering more.

Our Equality Policy confirms our commitment to the creation of an inclusive, respectful, and empowering learning environment for all. By embedding equality into all areas of school life—teaching, leadership, curriculum, staffing and community engagement—we aim to foster a setting where everyone is respected, supported, and able to flourish.