



ST. WINEFRIDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

Mission Statement

Welcome to St Winefride's where we come together to learn, laugh, listen, live and love in the presence of Jesus.

At our school, we believe that everyone is valued as a unique gift from God.

We work together to create an engaging learning environment, where all children are challenged to achieve their full potential.

Statement/Principles

The Single Equality Policy is our response to the Single Equality Act (October 2010).

The Single Equality Act is an attempt to amalgamate all the equalities legislation into one single equality policy, bringing together the duties set out in our Race, Disability and Gender policies, covering all seven of the equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of access and the diversity within the school community is celebrated and valued.

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At St. Winefride's, our Christian ethos ensures that equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, age or any other of the protected characteristics.

Aims and Objectives

- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education we provide in our school.
- We ensure that all our children have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect or prohibited conduct that may form barriers to learning.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We celebrate the cultural diversity of the wider world and show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance.
- Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

Our Legal Duties Legislation relating to equality and discrimination are:

Age - Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work. The admission of pupils out of their chronological age is considered on an individual basis and we would work alongside the admissions teams and other external agencies as appropriate.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Please refer to Accessibility Plan and SEN local offer on the school website). It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. Long-term illnesses such as cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

Gender reassignment - A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and, therefore, it is relevant in any school environment.

Marriage and civil partnership – Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.

Pregnancy and maternity - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.

Race - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.

Sex – gender.

Sexual orientation - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

Religion and belief - Religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination do not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.

The Public sector Equality Duty 2011 has three aims under the general duty for schools:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act,
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In this school we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the school community and its life, all will be treated equally.

Race Equality

This section of the policy reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities
- Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment
- Promote equality between men and women.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Policy Commitments

Promoting Equality: Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Admissions to the Foundation Stage 2 class are coordinated by the Local Authority admissions team. In-year admissions are dealt with by the Admission subcommittee of the governing body.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy.

We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Promoting Equality: Curriculum

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this, we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality,
- A rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school,
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to all aspects of equality,
- The promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs,

- The use of images and materials which positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

Promoting Equality: Achievement

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement.
- A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.
- All pupils are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning.
- The positive achievements of all pupils will be celebrated and recognised.

Promoting Equality: The ethos and culture of the school

- At St. Winefride's, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community,
- We strive to achieve a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school,
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect,
- The displays around the school reflect diversity across all aspects of equality and are frequently monitored,
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities (this not only includes physical access, but takes into account wider access to school information and activities),
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and off-site activities,
- Pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice for example, through the School Council, and there are regular opportunities to engage with pupils about their learning and the life of the school,
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included.

Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St. Winefride's Catholic Primary School. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

- All permanent posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants,
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are aware of what they should do avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity,
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds,
- Copies of the Equalities Policy and practice are available for all supply staff and contractors,
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review.

Employer duties

As an employer, we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all

NB/ As a community based in the Catholic faith, the governing Body of St. Winefride's follows the advice given by The Bishop's Conference of England and Wales which, whilst at the same time recognising the contribution of teachers of

other Christian Churches, other faiths and other teachers, refers to the employment of Catholic teachers as a high priority, stating that:

“The preservation and development of the quality and distinctive nature of Catholic schools depends on the faith, practice and commitment of the teachers in the schools, working with their governing bodies”

The Memorandum also requires that for the most senior roles i.e. the posts of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education the post must be filled by a baptised and practising Catholic. For other leadership posts that directly affect the Catholic Mission of the school they should, wherever possible, be staffed by skilled practitioners who are committed Catholics.

Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors,
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents,
- Parents of any children affected by harassment or bullying will be fully supported.
- The school reports to Governors, parents and LA on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

At St. Winefride's, we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school,
- Maintain good channels of communication to ensure parents' views are captured to inform practice,
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations,
- Ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. EAL, pupils with disabilities etc. are made to feel welcome.

Disability – to be read in conjunction with the school local offer and accessibility plan

Reasonable adjustments:

The school is required to improve access to the curriculum, our buildings and our other services to disabled people. This also means that we need to take a proactive stance and anticipate what we may need in the future for disabled users. To enable all children to access the curriculum:

- School visits are planned, and individual children's needs are risk assessed.
- If necessary, staff allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to access tasks e.g. use equipment in practical work.
- Staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education.
- Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation
- Accessibility plan.
- 1:1 teaching assistant to work with a range of children with complex needs and seek advice from the SENCO and external agencies to support them appropriately.
- Emergency and evacuation systems are set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability.

Tracking and monitoring of vulnerable pupils

At St. Winefride's, we work hard to ensure that all pupils, no matter what their additional or special needs, can have the opportunity to progress and develop academically and socially. Children with SEN receive individual termly learning targets which take into account advice from other agencies e.g. SALT and the Autism Service. The SENCO closely monitors the delivery of intervention programmes across the whole school and liaises with class teachers to ensure a high standard of provision.

Teaching staff provide challenging targets for children identified as being more able. Children also have access to regional events taking place out of school hours and termly enrichment events arranged by the Neston Cluster of Schools.

Children with English as an additional language are welcomed into our school and supported. Pupils in receipt of pupil premium are tracked and provided with additional support including specialist intervention to enable them to reach their full potential.

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equalities.

The Role of Governors

- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that the school complies with all equality's legislation relevant to the school community, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.
- Seek to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or special needs that a child may have.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that no child or adult is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion, sexual orientation or race.

The Role of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

- In partnership with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and schemes
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact
- To ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- To promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum.
- To promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life, e.g. through assemblies and displays around school.
- To treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

The Role of the Class Teacher

- To ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect.
- To pay due regard, when selecting teaching materials, to sensitivities of all members of the class and not to provide material which is racist or sexist in nature.
- Strive to provide material that gives positive images of all ethnic minorities and that challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.
- When planning and delivering the curriculum, to use this policy to guide them, both in the choice of study themes and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- Actively support all support staff in challenging incidents of prejudice or racism, encouraging them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.
- Report any incidents to the Head immediately informing her of actions taken and she will decide if any further action needs to be taken.

Outcomes

This policy will play an important part in the educational development of individual pupils. It will ensure that all pupils are treated equally and as favourably as others. The school will make all the reasonable adjustments necessary to promote equal opportunity and equal treatment of all members of the school community.

Policy agreed by the Policies' committee – 14.03.23

Check list for school staff and governors

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Down Syndrome Day and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?