

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Equal Opportunities Policy

*This policy incorporates the
Single Equality Scheme.*

Date Written:	January 2009
Date Reviewed & Ratified:	31 st October 2016
Review Frequency:	Yearly
Date to be Reviewed:	Spring 2017

MISSION STATEMENT

The family of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School believes that each person is unique and made in the image and likeness of God as expressed through Jesus Christ in the Gospels. We believe that our mission is to recognise, nurture and develop the God given gifts, talents and spirituality of each individual.

Aims

- ◆ To inspire children to appreciate, develop and practice spiritual, moral, cultural and aesthetic values.
- ◆ To foster in children a sense of awe and wonder for God's created world and to have an awareness of their unique place in it
- ◆ To appreciate childhood as valued and right for all pupils
- ◆ To provide an environment which creates and fosters loving, responsible and creative human beings.
- ◆ To enable each individual child to achieve their full potential
- ◆ To base our school's curriculum on direct and practical experiences which harness children's natural curiosity.
- ◆ To provide a curriculum which fosters active learning, autonomy and choice.
- ◆ To encourage and nurture independence in children which enables them to become life long learners.
- ◆ To value and promote thinking and communication skills as a foundation for all learning.
- ◆ To provide a safe, secure, structured learning environment.
- ◆ To expect and develop the highest standards of self-discipline and positive behaviour from all members of the school community.
- ◆ To provide children with a positive self-image which develops respect and co-operation with others.
- ◆ To promote challenging and equal opportunities for all children within a positive and ordered environment.
- ◆ To encourage parents and members of the wider community to enhance our children's education.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Disability Equality Duty Policy and Accessibility Plan.

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

- 1.1 The curriculum at St Mary's Catholic Primary School is designed to ensure that all pupils have access to the same range of entitlement and there is a recognition that the contribution of all pupils is valued.
- 1.2 There is a positive approach to gender equality, cultural diversity and special educational needs.
- 1.3 Access to all curriculum subjects and enrichment activities is available to all pupils regardless of their age, ability, gender, race, background.
- 1.4 The school strives to be inclusive and supportive of pupils with differing needs and abilities whether physical, emotional, behavioural or intellectual.
- 1.5 Teaching and other groupings, such as queues, assembly seating, lines for dismissal, classroom seating and playground areas, are organised by criteria other than gender or race, for example by age, ability, friendship or the children's free choice.
- 1.6 Equality is demonstrated when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of children.
 - Discipline - notably rewards and sanctions - are the same for all children
 - Our school uniform policy embodies the same standards for all children
 - Separate toilets are provided
 - A wheelchair access toilet is provided
 - Children and staff are encouraged to respect and value each other, and build and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community
- 1.7 Any discrimination that arises inside or outside the classroom is handled sensitively and discussed with the children. Any racial/hate incidents are reported termly to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.

2. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 2.1 St Mary's Catholic Primary School recognises the value of evaluating and monitoring equality opportunities.
- 2.2 Measures include:
 - reviewing attendance and punctuality - analysing reasons for absence - where patterns affect particular groups of children

- reviewing the quality of relationships between different groups of children and their progress
- analysing the attainment and progress of pupils, highlighting significant variations in attainment among pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background, e.g. looked after children, pupils on the child protection register.

3. PARENTS/CARERS

- 3.1 All parents/carers will be treated with respect and equally regardless of gender, ethnicity, background or ability.
- 3.2 It is expected that parents/carers will treat all staff with the same consideration.

4. STAFFING

- 4.1 All staff at St Mary's Catholic Primary School are provided with equal opportunities.
- 4.2 No teaching or non-teaching post is gender-specific and, when appointing staff, recruitment procedures recommended by the West Sussex Local Authority are followed*.
- 4.3 Tasks, duties and responsibilities are allocated without discrimination. Men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups. All staff have equal access to professional development and posts of responsibility*.

*As a Catholic Voluntary Aided school, the post of Headteacher and of R.E. Co-ordinator is required to be filled by a practising Catholic.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the school's policies on Accessibility, Disability Equality Duty, Admissions, Behaviour, Curriculum, Exclusion of Pupils, Offsite and Educational Visits, Pupil Discipline, Recruitment & Selection, Special Educational Needs and Uniform.

Policy ratified by the Governing Body:

Signed: 
Chair of Governors

Date: 31st October 2016

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Single Equality Scheme

A. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

St Mary's Catholic Primary School operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

A.a Teaching and Learning

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 by ethnicity, gender and disability 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 race, gender and disability, 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;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

A.b Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

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.

B. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St Mary'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.

We endeavour to 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.

C. Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006), Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

C.a Race Equality

This section of the plan 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.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Assess the impact of our policies on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils;
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

C.b Disability

St Mary's Catholic Primary School has an Accessibility Plan.

C.c 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.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Assess the impact of our policies on pupils, staff and parents by gender including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils;

C.d 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.

C.e Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

D. Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. In order to achieve this the Governing Body set up an Equalities Scheme working party.

E. Roles and Responsibilities

E.a The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability. The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability. The Governing Body takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils. The Governing Body welcomes all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

E.b The Role of the Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policies, supported by the governing body in doing so.

It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of Equality Policies, and that staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to Equality Policies, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

E.c The Role of all Staff:

All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policies.

All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and will challenge stereotypical images.

All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.

Teachers will support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

F. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher/ Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority on a termly basis.

F.a What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

F.b Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

F.c Responding to and Reporting Incidents

Discriminatory behaviour will be challenged immediately by the member of staff present, and the incident reported to the Headteacher in writing. The Headteacher will investigate further if necessary/appropriate, and will respond to the victim, the perpetrator and their parents/carers.

Where appropriate, the issue will also be addressed with the class, year group or whole school.

All incidents will be recorded, and will be reported to the Governing Body and the Local Authority on a termly basis.

G. Review of Progress and Impact

The Policy has been agreed by our Governing Body. St Mary's C P School has a rolling programme for reviewing school policies and their impact.

St Mary's C P School makes regular assessments of pupils' learning and uses this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability is monitored regularly to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and appropriate action is taken to address any gaps.

H. Publishing the Policy

St Mary's C P School publishes our policies on the school website. Hard copies are also available from the School Office.

APPENDIX A:

ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

The school will ensure that:

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- All staff are aware of the school's Equality Policies;
- The talents of disabled pupils are recognised and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender;
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option; class assemblies; fund raising etc;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies;
- Extended school activities, such as breakfast and after-school clubs, take into account pupil needs and access issues; and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status.

The school will provide:

- Extra and additional support for pupils who are under-achieving in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well being, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment;
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).

PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND MEETING NEEDS

The school will:

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the school and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities;
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups;

- Support disabled pupils in the period of transition between primary and secondary school to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings;
- Help children and young people to understand others and value diversity;
- Promote shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them;
- Develop skills of participation and responsible action.

ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The school will:

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives;
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity;
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis;
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policies on behaviour.

MONITORING IMPACT

The school will:

- Collect and analyse evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement

The Governing Body will:

- Receive evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability and use this to ensure that strategies to raise achievement are being applied appropriately.