

Holy Cross RC Primary School



Equalities Policy

Signed _____ [Headteacher] Date October 2024

Signed _____ [Chair of Governors] Date October 2024

Next Review Date: October 2027

Holy Cross RC Primary School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

1. Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve their highest potential.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

2. Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty:

3. Public Sector Equality Duty

This requires all public organisations, including schools, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

4. Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 is also included in our school development plan, self-evaluation review, school website and newsletters. There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEND, EAL, new arrivals and anti-bullying policies, as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council.

The Equality Act 2010 also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this is found in our recruitment policy.

5. What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all interview panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration, and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

6. Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school's Behaviour Policy takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over- representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

7. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

8. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability.

- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.

We collect and analyse data on:

- the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability;
- attainment based on ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensure we meet the needs of all pupils and provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving. We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys.

We have a multi-faith prayer space that children can access throughout the school day. We teach and celebrate all faiths.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary. We also have an Accessibility Action Plan that is reviewed at least annually, which is designed to:

- increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff and visitors.

9. Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

10. What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference, diversity and British Values and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history, and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events, e.g. Black History Month.
- We are an accredited 'School of Sanctuary'

11. Other ways we address equality issues

- We maintain records of all training relating to the Equalities.
- Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities.
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.
- The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.
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12. Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities. We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. Our Equality Objectives are:

1. To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular opportunities, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity.
2. To narrow the gap between boys' and girls' attainment and progress by the end of KS2.
3. To ensure that there is appropriate and supportive induction procedures in place for any EAL children who enrol at the school.

13. Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty annual report to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors, parents and carers.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

15. The Governing Body

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.
- The governing body seeks 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 governing body will ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion, race or gender. For example, if a pupil's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.
- The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. Governors will review the Public Sector Equality Duty annually and the Equality Policy every 2 years.

16. Headteacher

- The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness and will take appropriate action in any cases of discrimination.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

17. Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will ensure:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect;
- any incidents are recorded and reported to the Headteacher;
- plan and deliver curriculum and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils;

- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult;
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work;

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure.

18. Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

19. Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. 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 are also concerned to ensure, wherever possible, that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer, we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practices and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams

