



EQUALITY POLICY

2023- 2025

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CoG signature	

Introduction

Mount Carmel RC Primary School acknowledges and welcomes diversity among pupils, staff, governors and visitors. Our Equality 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. In doing so, we fulfil one of the greatest commandments of all:

“Love your neighbour as yourself”

Mark 12:31

This basic equality between all human beings has always been fundamental to Catholic belief and teaching. We believe that diversity enriches our lives and it is to be valued. Our aim is to develop our culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

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 Mount Carmel nobody will face discrimination on the basis of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010). We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We guard against discrimination through the positive promotion of equality; making reasonable adjustments and by challenging negative stereotypes, all within an environment which champions respect for all.

Mount Carmel RC Primary School is an inclusive school where we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 9 key principles:

Principle 1 - All members of the school community are of equal value and should be treated with dignity and respect. Every member of the school community is 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. All individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and should treat others in the same way.

Principle 2 - The school recognises respects and values difference and diversity. Treating people equally does not necessarily mean treating them all in the same way. The school will take account of differences and the kind of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to protected characteristics. The school will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices in relation to disability including the provision of any necessary auxiliary aids and services. The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances should be appreciated and valued. Diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the school.

Principle 3 – The school will actively promote British values. The school will ensure that equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity is promoted and that pupils respect others and are well prepared to contribute to wider society and life in modern Britain. The fundamental British values are democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Principle 4 - The school fosters positive attitudes and relationships. The school intends that its policies, procedures and activities should actively promote positive attitudes, good relations and mutual respect between all groups of individuals who are different from each other. The school will take action to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language including language that is derogatory about disabled people and homophobic and racist language.

Principle 5 - The school observes good equalities practice for all members of staff. The school will ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including in recruitment, promotion and continuing professional development. The school's policies and procedures for employees and potential employees will take into account equality considerations including any relevant exemptions or exclusions.

Principle 6 - The school aims to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers which may already exist. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts in its policies and practices, the school will take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers which may already exist in relation to certain groups with protected characteristics.

Principle 7 - The school will consult and involve widely in relation to equality issues. When tackling equality issues, the school will consult and engage with those affected by its decisions and where possible, with those people who have special knowledge who can inform the school's approach.

Principle 8 - The school will address bullying and prejudice motivated incidents. The school takes bullying and prejudice motivated incidents seriously and any such conduct and behaviour will be carefully monitored and dealt with fairly and firmly. The school will take into account the specific guidance issued by the DfE on bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying and bullying related to sexual orientation, transgender, disability, race and religion. Training will be given to members of staff to ensure they are aware of how to identify and to deal with such incidents.

Principle 9. - The school fosters a shared sense of cohesion and belonging and intends that its policies and procedures should benefit society as a whole.

The school will strive to ensure that all pupils, members of staff and school governors feel a sense of belonging within the school and within the wider school community and that they feel respected and are able to participate fully in school and in public life. The school intends that its policies and procedures should benefit society as a whole both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and by promoting greater participation in public life of all individuals from all groups including those with protected characteristics.

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/staff 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 and two specific duties.

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or “general 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.

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:-

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

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.

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 is also included in the school prospectus, school website and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN policy, and accessibility plan as well as minutes of meetings involving governors.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers. All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process. Equality policy and practices are covered in all staff inductions. All temporary staff are made aware of the Equality Policy and practices.

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 Head Teacher ensures that all appointment 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 actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all. Protected characteristics are taught in our curriculum and embed into our ethos.
- Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent. As a Roman Catholic primary school we give priority in admissions to members of the Roman Catholic faith. We do not refuse admission to pupils of other faiths or no faith if we have unfulfilled places (as per page 12 of The Equality Act 2010).

Behaviour, Exclusions & Attendance

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

Addressing Prejudice & 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
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

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.

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 through our pupil admissions home visits and questionnaires.
- 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 English and Maths skills.

We collect and, analyse data:

- on the school population by factors such as: gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

- Pupil Premium
- Ethnicity
- Free School Meals
- EAL
- All SEND
- Looked after Children

- We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as 'less able'.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We 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 ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- We have also implemented an Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantages 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.

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 promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity 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 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 our catholic faith and RE teaching, displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

Other ways we address equality issues

- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed, e.g. Governors Meetings.
- 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.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the School Council and PSHE lessons.
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

Our Equality Objectives 2023

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence.

1. OBJECTIVE: - Ensure by the end of this academic year, all staff have received up to date equality training.

Through staff and governing body discussion, it was agreed that all concerned would benefit from up to date training with regards to equality procedures and approaches for our setting.

The aim is to complete this process this academic year and then to complete and annual update in future years.

2. OBJECTIVE: - To demonstrate very good progress across all year groups in: reading, writing and maths for all children (relative to their starting points) ensuring challenging targets are set and monitored to increase the number of children working at age-related expectations year-on-year.

The attainment gaps that remain, following the impact of disrupted learning during the pandemic, continue to be addressed through high quality teaching and learning. However, our data analysis and ongoing assessment informs us that some of our children require further intervention in order to achieve their prior attainment level; this is particularly true for some of our disadvantaged pupils and children with SEND.

3. OBJECTIVE: - 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.

We are developing the breadth of our personal development curriculum and mapping out provision and opportunities across the year and addressing gaps. We need to ensure that the groups allow for an overall range of representation from across the school community.

Equality Action Plan- How are equality objectives will be met

Equality Objective <i>And...</i> Protected group this will affect or influence	How this objective will be met	Timeframe	Who has responsibility	Progress to date
1. Ensure by the end of this academic year, all staff have received up to date equality training.	Training to be delivered by an external provider. Those unable to access the training on a 'live' basis will be supported to access the materials at the earliest opportunity.	2023-2024	HT/DHT	
2. To demonstrate very good progress across all year	Attainment baseline agreed. Monitoring and intervention plan	2023-2025	HT/DHT SLT Teachers	

<p>groups in: reading, writing and maths for all children (relative to their starting points), ensuring challenging targets are set and monitored to increase the number of children working at age-related expectations year-on-year.</p>	<p>devised and agreed.</p> <p>Mid- term outcomes analysed, discussed and evaluated.</p> <p>Intervention/sharing of good practice in place.</p> <p>Any resulting CPD needs met.</p> <p>Cycle of monitoring to continue and progress towards meeting the target evaluated.</p>		<p>Teaching Assistants</p> <p>*GB to monitor progress through termly reports from the HT and visits to school.</p>	
<p>3. 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.</p>	<p>Termly across groups -analyse of engagement in groups</p> <p>Pupil voice activities</p>	<p>2023-2025</p>	<p>DHT</p>	

Monitoring and Reviewing Objectives

We will review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.