

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Equality Policy
July 2020

Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement emphasises our commitment to the importance of equality:

Holy Family is a Catholic community, embracing the clear Christian values of respect, service and justice.

We are a family of many cultures sharing one faith. We exist to educate all young people towards excellence in all dimensions of their lives, recognising the uniqueness of each and the equality of all.

Our school helps families to educate their children in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church in an environment which inspires, encourages and supports the development of our students through nurturing their gifts and talents.

Our school community will keep alive the memory of Jesus through the Eucharist and through the practice of our Faith. We want everyone at Holy Family to experience the joy of the Gospel in their journey through school and beyond. Together we will work to make a difference in our community and in the wider world. Through the mission statement the school promotes the individuality of all our staff and students. We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The Equality Objectives bring together the school's approach for promoting equality in our policies and procedures and, most importantly in our day to day practices and interactions with the whole school community. Our scheme includes students, staff, governors, parents, carers and all those within our extended school community.

We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being inclusive and accessible and ultimately in providing a quality learning experience for our students within a Catholic context. The school admissions policy outlines the criteria by which school places are allocated, giving preference to children who are baptised Catholics.

This is a working document which will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Policy Statement

1. The School acknowledges and welcomes diversity among students, staff and visitors.
2. We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or students, on the grounds of their sex, race, age, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or physical or mental abilities. Student admissions are based on grounds of religion as per the admissions criteria.
3. We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our School.
4. We ensure that all students have equal access, where reasonable, to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the School.
5. The School is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities.
6. We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students, parents and carers and aim to comply with requests relating to religious observance and practice. These are considered by the Headteacher on an individual basis.
7. We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve. Preference may be given in respect of appointment to certain positions to preserve the school's religious character in accordance with the policies of the Diocese of Brentwood.

8. We will make reasonable adjustments, when required to, in order to increase access to the curriculum, improve access to the School building and improve delivery of information.

Meeting our Duties

Statutory Requirements

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which applies to public bodies including maintained schools and Academies.

The PSED extends to all “protected characteristics”:

- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Sex
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Age
- Gender Reassignment

Under the statutory duties all schools have responsibilities to promote race, disability and gender equality.

Race Equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.
2. Promote equality of opportunity.
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Disability Equality

The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. Eliminate disability-related harassment.
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
6. Take steps to take account of disabled people’s disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

Accessibility

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled students and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

1. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access.
2. Make written information accessible to students in a range of different ways.
3. Ensure that disabled students do not receive less favourable treatment, and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Gender Equality

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment.
2. Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap.

Community Cohesion

We also have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socioeconomic groups.

Strand 1 – Teaching, learning and the curriculum – with emphasis across the curriculum on valuing common values and diversity, promotion of awareness of human rights and the responsibility to uphold and defend them, developing skills of participation and responsible actions.

Strand 2 – Equity and Excellence – equality for all to succeed, removing barriers to access, eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.

Strand 3 – Engagement and extended services – enabling the means for children and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and to build positive relations and links with different schools and communities – locally and more widely.

We recognise that our school has a responsibility for educating children who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of culture, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds.

We understand that there are different types of schools in different communities and will promote the interaction of students with those in other schools.

We understand that we already have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups.

Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief

Within the parameters of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 (SSFA) the scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Our School Values and Vision

At Holy Family we believe that every person is created in the image of God. We want our thoughts and actions to be inspired by this sacred understanding we have of ourselves and of each other. Our school community will keep alive the memory of Jesus through the Eucharist and in the practice of our Faith. We want to encourage, inspire, challenge and care for each other, be open to the wider world about us, and celebrate life together.

Meeting the duties described above will mean that all our actions will embody our School's key principles and values, which includes that:

- We aim to provide equal access to opportunities for all our students.
- We celebrate the diversity of our world.
- We respect the religious, spiritual, cultural, and moral values of others and consider thoughtfully their attitudes, values and beliefs.
- We aim to provide an atmosphere of harmony and respect and safety within a Catholic educational environment.
- We strive to make the best possible provision for all our students.

- We respect diversity. We know that treating people equally is not simply treating everyone the same.

At Holy Family we take the necessary steps to ensure that every child is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life within the context of a Catholic community. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.

We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the students.

As a Catholic school we are guided by the Church's teachings including the recent publication by the CES, 'Made in God's Image: Challenging homophobic and biphobic bullying in Catholic Schools'.

Our Objectives

Raising standards of educational achievement

Equality objective: to ensure that all children gain the knowledge they need to prepare them for adult life, through a curriculum that meets the needs of all students. The curriculum will be planned to meet the needs of the students and not driven by external factors.

We will be looking in particular for evidence of attainment of students with special educational needs, and those from minority ethnic communities that are currently under-achieving.

We will support students to make informed choices, not limited by stereotypical thinking, by providing access to independent careers guidance for our students. This will include information on the full range of education and training options, including apprenticeships.

Supporting all children and young people, particularly the disadvantaged

Equality objective: to narrow the achievement gap for students, including looked after children, by ensuring increased opportunities and improved outcomes. We will monitor and review Pupil Premium expenditure to secure the best outcomes for students and provide inspiration, encouragement and support for them to achieve within school and move on to the best possible destinations.

Equality objective: to help children to fulfil their full potential, by supporting families and focusing support on improving the lives of the most vulnerable children.

We aim to support families with children who have poor attendance as this is a key barrier to progress and future opportunity.

We will monitor the use of exclusion for different groups, including those groups with a disproportionately high rate of exclusion.

We aim to prevent and tackle the bullying of children and young people, particularly prejudice-based racist, sexist and homophobic bullying.

Role and Responsibilities

Our Equality Objectives will be monitored within the School's self-evaluation and other review processes. Following this regular impact assessment, the whole equality scheme will be reviewed at least every three years.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of this scheme and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the Governors.

Staff are expected to promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.

Our students have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, to feel valued and to report to staff if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.

We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school, including parents/carers are adhering to our commitment to equality.

Publicising our Scheme

The Equality Objectives will be available to all stakeholders through the school website and staff and student induction. We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing evolution of our plan.

This includes:

- Work on making the curriculum more inclusive
- A working party to discuss equality and diversity issues.
- A forum for students
- Holding events for the wider community to celebrate the work of students and give the opportunity for feedback.
- Creating opportunities for staff development

Annual Review of Progress

We will continue to review annually the actions we have taken in the development of our Equality Objectives.

Equality Analysis – A Statement of Effectiveness

Holy Family is an inclusive school. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all students and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- Identification of students, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics.
- Student attainment and progress data relating to different groups.
- Students' views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution.
- Uptake and attendance at extracurricular activities in school.
- Exclusions data analysed by group.
- Outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage.

Of all the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. We record our outcomes using a wide range of criteria, both academic and experiential, for the various protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups.

This policy is to be reviewed every four years by the Governing Body.