

Single Equality Policy



Key People responsible for Community Cohesion and Equalities:

Finola Gill, Head teacher and Susan Buscombe, Deputy Head Teacher

Key Governor responsible for Community Cohesion and Equalities:

Lisa Martin, Chair of Governors

Other policies linked to this policy:

Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Pupil Welfare Policy, EAL Policy and RSE Policy

Policy Reviewed: November 2022

Introduction

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is part of Plymouth CAST and the Catholic Church; as such it is hallmarked by God's word in Holy Scripture.

This Single Equality Policy is reflected in our school mission statements 'Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God.'*(Micah) and We Learn, we Enable, we Respect and we Belong*

In the area of "Equality" we take as our starting point the words of Saint Paul to the Romans:

"All of us in union with Christ form one body and as part of it we belong to each other. Love each other as much as brothers and sisters should and have a profound respect for each other"

Every member of the school is regarded as of equal worth and importance, irrespective of his/her creed, culture, class, race, gender, sexuality or ability. A good education for all our pupils is possible only if equal opportunities practices are an integral feature of all aspects of the life of the school

Equalities practices should be evident in:

- The formal curriculum (the programme of lessons)
- The informal curriculum (extra- curricular activities)
- The hidden curriculum (the ethos of the school, the quality of personal relationships etc;)

All members of the school should be aware of our single equalities policy; this includes pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, parents, carers and the wider community.

Plymouth CAST Equality Objectives

Objective 1: 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 seclusion/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.

Objective 2: To Implement the TenTen Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education programme for Catholic Schools in order to promote a positive and healthy understanding of human relationships in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church

Objective 3: To ensure that staff recruitment complies with the Equality Act and that all staff are aware of and follow the school's Equality Policy. We will foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This will be measured by reviewing the policy on a timely basis, effective staff induction and on-going CPD.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to by the legal framework outlined at the end of this document, we are guided by seven key principles:

- All learners and their parents/carers are of equal value
- We recognise, respect and value difference
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- We ensure policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continual professional development
- We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
- When constructing a policy, we aim to consult and involve all those groups affected by it, both in its design and review
- All policies and activities should benefit society as a whole both locally and nationally fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life
- Alongside our Catholic faith curriculum, we encourage children and staff to incorporate aspects of Catholic Social Teaching, Laudato Si, and our Life to the Life curriculum into all aspects of their learning. In addition, we focus on developing key emotional skills such as resilience, self-control and empathy.

Integrating the Principles into Our Key Areas

Creed

- As a Catholic school, we acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others
- We are happy for pupils to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background unless these contravene health and safety policy and practices
- As a Catholic school the pastoral education of our students is considered of high importance. However, with regard to teaching Religious Education, we consider the role of the teacher is to encourage good moral values and kindness to others
- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different religious backgrounds
- We aim to involve people from a wide range of religious backgrounds in the design and review of policies which affect them by direct invitation and/or to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution

- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people with a wide range of religious backgrounds
- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. We need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in religion

Culture

- We value the history, experience and contribution of our multicultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school; all members should feel that their language or dialect is valued and that bilingualism is regarded as advantageous. We try to counter negative, patronising and stereotypical views; a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding
- We understand the need to be different without being excluded
- Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but are differentiated as appropriate to ensure that people from different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised

Policies, procedures and activities should promote positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, national origin or status and an absence of prejudice related bullying and incidents

- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- We aim to involve people from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the design and review of policies which affect them, by direct invitation to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution
- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people with a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Socio Economic Status

- We recognise the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life
- We intend that our policies should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life
- We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an

atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony

- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different socio-economic backgrounds
- We aim to involve people from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds in the design and review of policies which affect them by direct invitation to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution
- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people with a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds
- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same, we need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in life experience, outlook and background

Ethnicity

- We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form
- We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony
- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- We aim to involve people from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the design and review of policies which affect them by direct invitation to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution
- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people with a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same, we need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in ethnicity so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised

Gender

- As a school, we accept that there are gender inequalities in our society which impose limits on expectations and behaviour, so we constantly examine our curriculum procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality
- We encourage pupils to be aware of the rigid sex stereotypes presented by for example, the media. We try to ensure that our resources include non-sexist books which value the achievements of both sexes equally

- We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions. All pupils experience subjects previously considered to be suitable for single sex
- We ensure that teachers allocate their time fairly between sexes
- We ensure that all pupils have opportunities working with pupils from both sexes
- We ensure that we break down traditional sex stereotypes
- We ensure that pupils have opportunities for examining their own preconceived ideas of gender roles
- We ensure that whenever possible, classes have equal numbers of boys and girls, unless evidence shows that this is not beneficial for learning
- We do not differentiate between the sexes in respect of our school uniform
- We try to avoid stereotyped assumptions about the behaviour of boys and girls as these can often influence identification and assessment procedures
- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same, we need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in gender so that the different needs of girls and boys, and women and men are recognised
- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different genders
- We involve both males and females in the design and review of policies which affect them by direct invitation to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution
- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people of different genders
- The governing body regularly reviews attainment levels and learning outcomes of boys and girls, monitoring the difference. They frequently seek advice and implement strategies to differentiate needs to ultimately pursue equality in learning and attainment
- Policies, procedures and activities promote mutual respect between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual harassment
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence

Sexuality

- As a school, we make no assumptions about the sexuality of any of our members
- In our curricula, sexuality is taught in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and within the context of loving relationships. Whilst heterosexual relationships are the most common in our society, we acknowledge that a small but significant number of our pupils may develop a homosexual, bisexual or binary orientation. Pupils' questions are answered as they arise as honestly, factually and non- judgementally as possible
- Derogatory name calling (of any sort) is unacceptable
- Policies, procedures and activities should promote mutual respect between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual harassment

- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same; we need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in sexuality

Disability

- We welcome pupils with additional needs. We undertake to assess and meet the need of all our pupils as far as we are able. We aim to create a happy and educationally exciting environment in which all pupils can prosper
- Because pupils develop at different rates for different activities, we adopt a child- centred approach to learning which is based on each pupil's needs
- Pupils with additional needs constitute a very diverse group: they include pupils with physical, emotional, behavioural, sensory or learning needs. We acknowledge that especially able students have additional needs too.
- We seek assistance from a wide range of agencies where appropriate: for example, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, medical practitioners, social workers, psychologists etc.
- We ensure that pupils with additional needs are facilitated in participating in schools' curriculum to the fullest possible extent
- We liaise with our pre-school settings to establish the needs of new pupils and ensure preparation for their transition is the best possible
- We make reasonable adjustments to ensure pupils with additional needs are treated equally
- We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote positive attitudes towards people with additional needs, good relations between those with and without additional needs and an absence of harassment of people with additional needs
- We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative aspects of our policies by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of different abilities
- We involve people from a wide range of abilities in the design and review of policies which affect them by direct invitation to comment or posting the policy on the website and invite contribution
- We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater community cohesion and greater participation in the public life of people with a wide range of abilities
- Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same, we need to differentiate as appropriate. We do not discriminate but as appropriate, take into account difference in abilities and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- We welcome all parents, carers and those in the wider community who have additional needs, we aim where possible to assess and accommodate their requirements

Equal Opportunities and the School Structure

Recruitment and Selection

- We endorse in full the Plymouth City Council's and CAST's Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy except in regard to the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales "Guidance on the appointment of teachers to Catholic schools" which will take precedence.
- The school's staff development and recruitment and selection policies are based on good single equalities practice and safer recruitment guidance
- We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees for example in recruitment, promotion and continual professional development whatever their ability, ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender or sexuality
- As a Catholic School we unequivocally state that our admissions criteria will give precedence to Catholic applicants and that we will allow the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales guidance on the appointment of staff

Action Plans

- We recognise that the actions resulting from this policy are what make a difference
- We acknowledge the importance of the effective links with schools in monitoring and furthering the progress of this policy
- The school identifies vulnerable groups and aims to make reasonable adjustments and put in place intervention strategies to support progress
- Each year we put in place an action within the schools' improvement/development plan, setting out specific actions and projects to implement this policy
- All subject areas across the school develop a range of intervention strategies where lack of progress has been identified for individual students in vulnerable groups and appropriate action is taken to address the balance and then monitored
- All success achieved is celebrated and rewarded
- Where progress is slow or stalled monitoring is continued and further strategies are implemented

The Curriculum

- Each Key stage workings are based on the principles and practices of the Single Equalities Policy and is reflected in their schemes of work, planning and assessment criteria

Ethos and Organisation

- We ensure that the guiding principles apply to the full range of policies and practices including those concerned with:

Learners' progress, attainment and achievement
 Learners' personal development, welfare and well- being
 Teaching styles and strategies
 Admissions and attendance
 Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
 Care, guidance and support
 Behaviour, discipline and exclusions

Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
Working with the wider community

Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice Related Bullying

- The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to within the legal framework (See end of document)
- The school is opposed to prejudices around ability or additional needs
- The school is opposed to prejudices around Racism, Xenophobia, including those directed towards religious groups such as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and those directed at travellers, migrants, refugees and those seeking asylum.
- The school is opposed to prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia
- There is guidance for staff on how prejudice related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with
- We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with
- The school works closely with other schools in the local area and with the local Community Police Department to improve Community Cohesion not only locally but nationally

Roles and Responsibilities

- The local governing board is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented
- Lisa Martin, Chair of Governors has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy
- The senior leadership team are responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities; are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination
- Finola Gill, Head Teacher has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy

All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom Deal with any prejudice- related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the Guiding Principles Support pupils in their classroom for whom English is an additional language
- Keep up to date with Equalities Legislation relevant to their work

Information and Resources

- We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff, governors and as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents, carers and associated agencies
- All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail

Religious Observance

- We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, pupils, parents and carers and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice

Staff Development and Training

- We ensure that all staff, teaching and non-teaching receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams

Breaches of Policy

- Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaching of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teacher and the governing board

Monitoring and Evaluation

- We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy and make adjustments as appropriate
- In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to abilities and additional needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender and other vulnerable groups as identified by the school
- We use the data collected to form strategies for improvement to try to ensure equality in learning

Legal Framework

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.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics" but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

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 by April 6th 2012
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012

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.

Ratified by the Local Governing Body: November 2021

Appendix 1

The School Context

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is set in the following context:

- The school is located close to the coast in the city of Plymouth, Devon.
- It is an oversubscribed faith school which serves the Cathedral parish but also draws from parishes across the city and is part of a Multi-Academy Trust – Plymouth CAST. **43%** of the intake are Roman Catholic.
- Socio-economic background of pupils –**23%** are Pupil Premium. The vast majority of children are in good quality urban environment located near public parks. We have a diverse intake.
- For information regarding the attainment levels of different groups of pupils (Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs including those with disabilities – SEN, ethnic groups and other identified vulnerable groups) see the School Self Evaluation Form – SEF.
- Four pupils (1.3%) have an EHCP and we currently have 78 children on our school inclusion register. 15% of the school population is SEND support with another 10% on monitoring.
- The pupil composition by gender is **53%** boys and **47%** girls.

- Ethnic composition of pupils. There are **many** ethnic groups across the school with only **47%** White British. Other main groups include **10%** White Eastern European, **7%** White Other, **5.3%** Black African and **5%** Indian
- The religious diversity of pupils in context of the local community is **43%** Catholic, **35%** Christian, **7.3%** Muslim, **3%** Hindu and **1.3%** Buddhist
- Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers- 2 children **0.7%** are asylum seekers and 1 child **0.3%** is a refugee.
- Pupil mobility – The percentage of children who began in Reception in the school is **83%**,
- Linguistic diversity of pupils is very high with 28 languages across the school, not including English – **48%** EAL. **35%** are Polish, **4%** Romanian and the other main ones are Chinese, French, Malayalam and Russian.

The school offers the following linguistic opportunities for pupils to gain a global understanding of other cultures through learning other languages and celebrating all languages spoken in the school:

- French in KS2 is regularly taught across the school.
- There is a display celebrating the languages spoken by children.
- Parents who speak another language/different backgrounds invited in to school
- EU Day of Languages
- Celebration of Chinese New Year
- Polish Celebrations of Religious Festivals
- Calendar Festivals for various Faiths covered through RE and our links with the Multi- faith places of worship