



Date of Policy: January 2026 **Approved by:** M&WB Committee **Date of next review:** January 2027

1 Introduction

Our school values the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter.

This Equal Opportunities Policy extends to adults: staff, parents and carers.

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

2 Aims and objectives

- We aim to act positively and have due regard to the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination within both our school and our community.
- We aim not to discriminate against anyone, be they staff, pupil or parent, on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, level of educational need or background.
- We aim to promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.
- We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils.
- We aim to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We value each pupil's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our school community, and showing respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and also aware of the relationship between that and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

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3 Racial equality

In our school we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi- cultural society.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures.

We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all groups, including minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, through the Religious Education curriculum, the children learn about the beliefs, traditions and practices associated with major world religions (such as Islam and Judaism).

4 Disability non-discrimination

Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non- disabled children.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children and adults full access to the school premises and to all areas of learning.

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, ensure access, modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities if children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

St Mary's has a full **Accessibility Plan** which is reviewed regularly which states:

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to increasing the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils. St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

School is committed to ensuring equal opportunity for all pupils and is an inclusive school.

- All pupils have a right not to be discriminated against.
- Pupils with a disability will have the same access to services and opportunities as non- disabled pupils.
- Their skills, experience and contribution will be valued and given equal recognition and respect.
- Services and opportunities for all pupils will promote and support building independence. These will be child centered working towards the individual's own targets.

5. Gender equality

We recognise that nationally, there is a discrepancy in the achievement of boys and girls. We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible in our school.

We have put in place a number of measures to raise the achievement of the boys, in English in particular. These may include:

- ensuring that early literacy skills are promoted in all activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage;

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- ensuring that the starting points for writing activities capture the interests and imagination of boys and girls alike;
- removing gender bias from our resources and ensuring, for example, that fiction books capture boys' interest;
- employing a variety of activities, and include a kinaesthetic element;
- making sure that our school environment promotes positive male role models, in relation to learning and achievement;
- minimising male stereotyping;
- providing challenge, competition and short-term goals;
- valuing and celebrating academic achievement in ways which will motivate boys.

If our analysis of pupils' attainment data indicates areas where girls achieve less well than boys, for example in mathematics or science, we will take measures to address this discrepancy. These may include:

- ensuring that boys do not dominate certain lessons, for example by answering the teacher's questions more readily;
- ensuring that mathematical and scientific subject matter is relevant to real life situations and problems;
- beginning lessons by clarifying the learning intentions, and giving the 'big picture';
- minimising female stereotyping and learning about female role models, for example, in the realms of science, technology and sport;
- using praise and celebration of girls' achievements in those areas where they may traditionally achieve less well than boys.

We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social background / family affluence, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to the relative achievement of boys and girls. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve the attainment of one gender group does not do so at the expense of the other.

6 The role of the class teacher & support staff

Class teachers recognise the possibility of their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls. All staff ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history. In geography, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

We recognise that it is important at St Mary's Catholic Primary School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- does not offend
- creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We log any incidents on CPOMs and share them with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will complete an electronic incident record.

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7 Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils. The adults in the school try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.

The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more-able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEND policy and Single Equality Scheme).

The school provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources. All pupils are actively involved in their own learning. A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

8 The role of the headteacher

It is the headteacher's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against;
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff;
- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in school assemblies, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school. Respect is one of the key Christian values adopted by the school.
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due seriousness, and in line with this policy.

9 The role of governors

In this policy statement, the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and accessibility, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or minority group a child may come from.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their gender, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

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10 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the headteacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's Behaviour (Values) Policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body, annually (or sooner, if it is considered necessary).

