

Equality Policy



HOLY CROSS
CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Living loving learning together.

<u>Agreed On</u>	<u>Signed</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
Spring 2024	J.Doyle	Spring 2025

Introduction

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

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination and promoting equality and fairness.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards such as the UN Convention on the rights of the Child.

Vision Statement

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is a vibrant Catholic school for children aged four to eleven with an attached Nursery for three and four year old children. It is situated in the cultural heart of the city, in an area of high deprivation. It is a smaller than average primary school. It has small single form entry classes from Nursery to Year 6. The percentage of FSM (29%) and SEND (25%) is roughly in line with the national average. The percentage of EAL (52%) is well above the national average and this has remained the case over the past few years.

The cohorts vary in some respects such as the percentage of male and female pupils in specific cohorts, however, there are many common trends for example in the proportion with SEND needs, EAL, minority ethnic and or pupils joining/leaving the school at different times. Mobility is much weaker than the national average. For example, some pupils leave and return to their home countries with their student parents who are studying in the city. Some pupils return at different times and some leave permanently. This affects the small cohorts, particularly in terms of classroom dynamics, attendance and interrupted learning and progress.

Our vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and

carers and other stakeholders irrespective of race, disability, gender, sexuality, religion or belief or socio economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all stakeholders connected to our school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions diversity and respect for all. At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School we respect difference, value diversity and embrace equality and fairness for all.

Legal Requirements

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School recognises that the Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty(PSED) which applies to all public bodies including all schools.

The PSED has two parts; the General and the Specific. Within the General Duty we recognise that we are required to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected -characteristic and those that do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Having 'due regard' means we must consciously think about the three main elements of the general duty as part of decision making, developing and reviewing our policies and on how we deliver our services.
- With regards to the Specific Duty, Holy Cross Catholic Primary School recognises that we are required to:
 - Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the PSED
 - Publish equality objectives every 4 years.
 - We are mindful that all information will be made accessible to the public both electronically and in paper format.

Guiding Principles regarding Equality/Good Practice

In working towards fulfilling our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and integrating equality within our school ethos we are striving to adopt a whole school approach. We have consulted, involved and listened to a range of opinions from people from broad and diverse backgrounds which reflect the protected characteristics as outlined under the Equality Act.

From this activity; which continues to be ongoing, we have developed the following seven key principles to our approach to equality.

- 1.**All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, race or culture, whatever their gender or gender identity, whatever their sexual orientation or whatever their religious or faith background.
- 2.**We recognise, respect and value difference and understand and promote that diversity is a positive. We take into account difference and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to race, disability, gender, religion and belief and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit at our school.
- 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 the wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate and contribute 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 our work, including 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 to 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 children raises standards across the whole school.

Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities within our School.

The guiding principles and equality objectives for Holy Cross Catholic Primary School will be referenced in the School Development Plan. They will be reviewed annually and refreshed on a four-year cycle.

Curriculum information will also be evaluated by looking specifically at equality groups in addition to the standard analysis conducted by the school and adjustments made as appropriate to ensure that those pupils within a protected characteristic groups are supported positively. All other data relating to whole school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that those groups are supported positively.

When reviewed each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our guiding principles as set out in this document.

School Governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and the PSED are properly implemented
- Making sure related procedures are followed
- Assigning a named governor to take an equality lead

The Head Teacher and the Equality Champion are responsible for:

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that all school stakeholders are aware of it
- Making sure its procedures are followed
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working. Provide training for them on the policy

- Making sure all staff know their roles and responsibilities
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All School Staff are responsible for:

- Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom
- Modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone
- Taking up equality training and learning opportunities

Pupils are responsible for:

- Supporting the school's equality ethos
- Sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the school council agenda- helping to review and develop good practice.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Supporting the school's equality ethos
- Challenging inappropriate language /behaviour
- Sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Following our expectations regarding equality and diversity

Responsibility for overseeing all equality practices in the school:

- Will lie with a named member of staff (Miss Hodges) and governor and will report directly to the Head teacher.
- Responsibilities include-
 - Co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
 - Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including from protected characteristic groups)
 - Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups.
 - Monitoring exclusions.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact:

The Holy Cross Catholic Primary School equality policy is linked to the school development plan and will include targets/objectives determined by all school stakeholders for promoting equality. The policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any patterns of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision making. The Equality Champion and governor responsible for equality will monitor specific outcomes.

All reports will be given to governors and the Head Teacher will provide monitoring reports for the governing body via the Head Teacher's report on a termly basis.

This policy links to other policies and in general the principals of equality will apply to all other school policies.

Concerns and Complaints

In the first instance any concerns or complaints about the implementation of the Equality policy should be addressed by following the guidance set out in the school's complaints policy. Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report on complaints annually and on action taken.

Disability Access Plan

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School has a disability access plan.

The key objective of this plan is to improve the physical environment of the school, improving access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum and to improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils, their parents /carers or to other school stakeholders.

This plan will be reviewed every 2 years (or sooner if appropriate) by the governing body after consultation with staff, parents and pupils.

Publishing Equality Information.

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to publish equality information that demonstrates we have due regard for the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those people who do not share it.

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those people who do not share it.

Information about our employees.

We have less than 150 employees, therefore, under the Act, we are not required to publish equality information about our employees.

Information about our pupil population.

As of March 2025, the total number of pupils on roll is 216 (Nursery to Year 6).

The breakdown is shown in the attached grid (Appendix 1), in addition to pupils with a protected characteristic, we have provided information on other vulnerable groups of pupils, (denoted by *)

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 Duty.

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we are working to ensure all school stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities in complying to both the **General Duty** and the **Specific Duty** of the **Act**.

The information below is a summary of how we are aware of these requirements and how we respond to them:

-Our Governing Body will receive training on the key concepts of the Equality Act 2010.

-All staff have received training on the key concepts of the Equality Act 2010.

-We have a named Governor and staff member to act as Equality Champions to ensure equality and diversity remains on the respective agendas at all times.

- We promote an ethos that champions and supports respect, dignity and difference in line with our Catholic faith and beliefs.
- We have appropriate policies that deal promptly and effectively with incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment. These include prejudice based bullying related to a protected characteristic. Staff have appropriate training in challenging and dealing with bullying and harassment.
- We record all racist, homophobic or other prejudice based inappropriate behaviour or inappropriate language. We analyse our data to ensure we act upon any concerns in relation to these protected groups by identifying and patterns or trends with regards to these issues.
- Our Disability Access Plan increases the extent to which all pupils can participate in the curriculum, improve the physical environment of the school and increases the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils and parents/ carers.
- We review our accessibility plan every 2 years with the Governing Body (or sooner if necessary).
- We have a curriculum that is highly positive, offering memorable experiences that contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Through a broad range of study within our Citizenship, PHSE and RHE education, we work hard to promote respect, inclusivity and an appreciation of difference.
- Pupils are encouraged to broaden their understanding of other beliefs, cultures and faiths.
- We have a vibrant and well balanced school council that ensures pupils have a direct voice to discuss matters that relate to their concerns and overall well-being in school and within the immediate community. The school council is strong and articulate, contributing to whole school decision-making where appropriate.
- We have strategies for engaging with parent/ carers; including those who may traditionally find working with school difficult.
- We are a 'Food for Thought' school which means we are committed to healthy eating and we recognise a culturally diverse community and ensures all pupils receive a healthy meal each day. Our plan reflects our commitment to a healthy lifestyle, regardless of socio- economic background. We are also committed to using organic and ethically sourced foods.

We recognise and understand that attendance plays an integral part in a pupil's achievement at school. Thus, through our Attendance and Punctuality protocol, we investigate any discrepancies that may occur and address any inequalities appropriately. We strive to ensure our pupils maintain a high level of attendance and punctuality.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

In line with our responsibility under the Specific Duty of the Equality Act, Holy Cross Catholic Primary School will be having consultations with all school stakeholders to establish our equality objectives. The objectives will be decided upon and then published during Summer Term 2021.

Reviewing Equality Objectives.

The review of the progress on our equality objectives will take place annually and will help inform how our school sets new priorities. This information will be published and made available across all platforms.

PUBLICATION

All equality policies are published on our website and are available both electronically and in a hard copy format.

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School adopts a whole school approach to equality and diversity and considers it important for pupils to learn about equality and human rights. We adhere to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) statement:

'To reap the full benefits of equality and human rights education, it is essential to teach topics in an environment which respects the rights and differences of both students and teachers. Without an equality and human rights culture within the classroom and school as a whole, learning about these topics can at best appear irrelevant, and at worst, hypocritical. The respect and tolerance it teaches will help staff and pupils create a healthier, happier, fairer school culture and could lead to reductions in bullying and other negative behaviour and improvements in attainment and aspirations'