

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

To live, love and learn joyfully in the family of Christ



Equality Policy and Scheme (Including Equalities Information for Stakeholders and objectives)Policy

Approved by Governors: January 2024

Date for review: January 2025

Equality vision and values

It is important to note that *“The principle underlying the concept of equality of opportunity is that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same.*

The legislation requires that account should be taken of people’s differing experiences, needs and histories, and of the differing challenges and barriers which they may face. The Act’s definition of equality of opportunity is complex in its legal terminology but is of substantial importance”.

(Equalities Update for Herts. Schools Spring 2015).

1. Mission

Sacred Heart is a welcoming, happy and positive faith community where the unique identity and contribution of every member of the community is valued. We strive to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and respond to his command ‘do to others whatever you would like them to do to you’ (Luke 6:31). Our mission statement is central to the life and work of the school and guides us as we strive to maintain and respect the equality, dignity and rights of every individual i.e.

“Live, Love and Learn joyfully in the Family of Christ”

At Sacred Heart School, we promote the Gospel values as revealed to us through the life of Jesus Christ. Our mission statement captures our desire to follow the example of Christ in welcoming, nurturing and developing the individual child as a unique and precious gift, created in the image of God, ready to do His work. We recognise the dignity of each individual and aim to live as one family based on Gospel values.

Sacred Heart School recognises the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly:

- **Article 29: Your education should help you to use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.**
- **Article 30: You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion- or any you choose.**
- **Article 32: You have a right to be safe.**

2.0 Policy Statement

We are a welcoming faith community where the unique identity and contribution of every member of the community is valued.

We are committed to creating an environment for learning which will enable all children to achieve the highest possible standards in an inclusive context that values learning and responds to individual and group needs. We seek to help children to develop into confident, responsible and caring adults through a rich faith experience and an ethos of tolerance, appreciation of difference and mutual respect. Integral to this is respect for everyone in their own beautiful uniqueness. It is the responsibility of every member of our community to ensure that this ethos is actively and consistently reflected in our practice.

We seek to promote equality of access, participation and opportunity in every aspect of the life of pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Our purpose is to ensure that barriers are recognised and removed. Rigorous monitoring of our policies, practice and outcomes for different groups is an important part of our self-evaluation process.

It is accepted that every individual is equally important and that no-one has the right to harass, insult, attack or cause offence to any other person for any reason. All members of the school community have the right not to experience discrimination at school, whether or not it is directed at them. It is expected that hurtful behaviour and discrimination will be challenged at all times.

As a community, we aim to celebrate diversity and seek the full and active engagement of pupils, staff, parents and governors in all aspects of the community's development. However, we also strive to be an outward looking community, seeking to grow from the vitality and richness of the wider community that we serve. Through our policies and activities we aim to benefit wider society by fostering community cohesion.

3.0 LEGAL BACKGROUND

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector equality duties in line with the Equality Act 2010. The general duty is that the school should have due regard towards:

- eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Protected Characteristics are:

Protected Characteristics	For employees	For pupils
Disability	•	✓
Ethnicity and race	•	✓
Gender (sex)	•	✓
Gender identity and reassignment	•	✓
Religion & belief	•	✓
Sexual orientation	•	✓
Age	•	N/A
Marriage & civil partnership	•	N/A
Pregnancy, maternity & breastfeeding	•	N/A

In addition to addressing the protected characteristics above, our school is committed to taking action on wider equality strands (e.g. 'vulnerable' children such as those in public care and young carers).

4.0 Specific Procedures and Processes for Delivery

4.1 Monitoring and Standards - all diversity areas

- We place a high priority on identifying the ethnicity, first language and specific diversity needs of all our pupils.

- Diversity aspects, including ability, disability, gender, ethnicity and relevant additional areas, are used to monitor achievement, attainment and progress, with a particular focus on the closure of any gaps in achievement at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage Our school plan also identifies and prioritises the reduction of underachievement.
- Diversity aspects are identified in the management and monitoring of all aspects of behaviour management, bullying, racist and prejudice based incidents and attendance. Analysis is used to plan for positive change and development.
- Ongoing reviews of all policies and documentation include consideration of diversity issues and their impact.
- The take up and impact of extra-curricular clubs is subject to periodic monitoring.

4.2 The Curriculum, Resources and Teaching and Learning - all diversity areas

- Teaching and curriculum provision supports high standards of attainment for all.
- The diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented in the school and the wider community is used by staff as a positive resource to promote an understanding of local, UK and global diversity.
- we seek to enable our pupils and staff to increasingly develop a critical awareness of community, diversity and equality & a willingness to learn from different cultures, backgrounds, faiths, beliefs and lifestyles
- Lessons and activities across the curriculum teach pupils to understand and value their own and others' personal, social and cultural identities, to respect and value difference and diversity and the skills to challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of different communities
- Staff are trained to have the confidence and skills to challenge all instances of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination. Pupils are taught to recognise prejudice, intolerance and discrimination and that they have no place in our community (see separate detailed procedures in relation to Anti-bullying and Preventing and Dealing with Racist Incidents)
- Staff recognise pupils' first language abilities as a teaching and learning resource and a strength. Classrooms and other common spaces in the school where work is displayed present positive and challenging images that are non stereotypical and reflect the diversity of our society and world.
- The school promotes positive attitudes to diversity throughout the year

4.3 Admissions and recruitment - all diversity areas

- We ensure that no aspects of diversity are a barrier to any individual's admission or recruitment to the school (see Admissions and Recruitment policies).
- Government and Diocesan guidelines and advice ensure that over-subscription criteria (including the practice of faith) are legal and comply with regulations.
- Admissions criteria go out for consultation to the wider community three years.

4.4 Wider outcomes for pupils- all diversity areas

- Pupils are encouraged to feel that their access to opportunities, both now and in their aspirations for future career and lifestyle choices, are not restricted by any aspect of their own or their family's diversity, ethnicity or socio-economic background. This is promoted at all times.

4.5 Parents and the wider community - all diversity areas

- Active steps are taken to involve all parents, and wherever appropriate additional steps will be taken to overcome barriers and ensure accessibility, including the use of translations, interpreters, large print, tape letters and reasonable adjustments to the physical environment.
- The school actively supports the Hertford and Ware Schools Consortium and works collaboratively with local schools, voluntary groups and wider agencies to ensure that we are represented and part of a wider diverse community.

4.6 Additional standard procedures and processes – disability

- The school has a separate Accessibility Plan which details on-going arrangements for pupils with disabilities.

4.7 Additional procedures and processes – ethnicity and religion

As a school we recognise:

- the vulnerability of isolated minority ethnic pupils and non-Catholics in the school
- the challenge of expanding pupils' insights into diversity of culture and religion/belief

4.8 Additional procedures and processes – wider diversity areas

- The school's policy on education of Children Looked After (CLA) is in a separate dedicated document.
- The school welcomes all members of the community and seeks to promote participation wherever possible from diverse representatives
- Appropriate support is provided for pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

5.1 Commitment to implementation

The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that all equalities actions are delivered effectively. The SLT will ensure that equality & diversity principles guide their work. The Headteacher will include Equality information in the termly report to Governors, as appropriate. All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

The link governor for Equalities is Renata Bryant

5.2 Governors will:

Policy Development	Ensure the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies.
Policy Implementation	Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies. Ensure the monitoring of equality outcomes relating to wellbeing of employees and the work of the school.
Behaviour	Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils. Celebrate examples of good practice from the school and among individual leaders, staff and pupils. Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases, homophobic/bi/transphobic or racist incidents.
Public Sector Duties	Ensure that the school carries out to the letter, the spirit of the statutory duties.

5.3 The Headteacher and senior staff will:

Policy Development	Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures. Ensure consultation with pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development review of policies.
Policy implementation	Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders. Ensure that managers and staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies. Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
Behaviour	Use informal and formal procedures as necessary to deal with situations as they arise. Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils. Highlight and celebrate good practice. Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents.
Public Sector Duties	Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively.

5.4 Subject Leaders and teaching staff will:

Policy Development		Identify and report equality policy implications as they arise in the classroom and in all dealings with pupils, staff and parents. Respond to consultation requests by creating opportunities for pupils and staff to share their comments, suggestions and feedback, ensuring that all voices are heard.
Implementation Policy	of	Develop and deliver a curriculum that fulfils the requirements of our equalities duty. Monitor outcomes, progress and participation of pupils by equalities dimensions and report any concerns at an early stage. Undertake and respond to equalities training as necessary.
Behaviour Model		Model positive attitudes, values and behaviour that promotes equality dimensions. Respond appropriately to the behaviour of pupils and staff, as a whole, and as individual (praising/challenging as necessary).
Public Sector Duties		Contribute to managing the implementation of the school's equality scheme.

5.5 teaching and support staff will:

Policy Development		Contribute to consultations and reviews. Raise with line managers any diversity issues or concerns which could contribute to policy review and development. Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures.
Implementation Policy Behaviour	of	Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils. Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out to the letter and spirit the school's equality scheme. Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents.
Public Sector Duties		Contribute to the implementation of the school's Equality Scheme.

5.6 Parents/Guardians/Carers will:

- Ensure that a teacher or the Headteacher is contacted as soon as possible if either an adult or a child is emotionally hurt by any comment made at school.
- Be made aware that there are different levels and sources of support available within the school. These are allocated by the Headteacher in order to meet the unique needs of children in each class.
- Ensure that the ethos, values and aims of the school are reinforced in the home.
- Share information so that the class teacher is aware of any particular needs or circumstances that could help us to provide appropriate support e.g. disabilities of any family member or caring responsibilities that impact on the family
- Endeavour to be appropriate role models for their children.

5.7 Pupils will:

- Respect themselves and each other
- Use language that is inclusive and is not underpinned by discriminatory or hurtful offline or online influences
- Raise any concerns about their own or other people's safety and wellbeing as soon as possible with an adult
- Grow in awareness of their rights and their responsibilities to each other

6.0 Stakeholder engagement and consultation

Our school is committed to encouraging all stakeholders to contribute to the development and review of all policies and procedures affecting the life of the school and its impact within the wider community. The range of techniques used to ensure stakeholder consultation includes:

- Ofsted style questionnaires & Parent View
- Working parties focused on key policy development issues
- staff/pupil interviews
- School parliament discussion, suggestions and minutes
- Pupil Voice
- General parental / staff feedback
- Staff Appraisal feedback

Feedback from stakeholders is welcome at any time and will feed into policy and practice development as appropriate.

7.0 Impact Assessment

All school policies are reviewed for equality implications as part of the rolling program of review and issues arising are identified and, where required, carried forward into the School Plan.

Key outcome data for equalities, e.g. bullying and racist incident data, identified imbalances in participation/achievement by group, and changes in school context data relevant to equalities will be included in the Headteacher's termly report to governors and identified through analysis of the Analyse School Performance (ASP) report.

Progress on the delivery of specific equalities objectives will be reported as follows:

- those related to staff will be addressed by the Governing Body, who have responsibility for personnel.
- those related to pupils and parents will be addressed by the Whole Governing Body

Performance in relation to our equalities duties will be reported to the Full Governing Body, through the Headteachers report or through a relevant committee's papers, including the following strands:

- Identification of any specific concerns related to achievement levels by diversity strands;
- Identification of any specific concerns related to attendance and behaviour by diversity strands;
- Identification of any specific concerns related to bullying and racist incidents by diversity strands. Notification that all bullying and racist incidents have been dealt with promptly, recorded and resolved;
- Evidence that high levels of trust and confidence have been maintained from the full diversity of parents;
- Evidence that the taught curriculum reflects and celebrates the diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented in the school, the local community and in British society is valuing and nurturing of individual pupils' identities;
- Evidence that all school staff have received appropriate training or induction on equalities issues; and
- Progress on any specific equalities objectives

8.0 Our Longer Term Commitment to Equality *(our Equality Objectives)*

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other information. Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages.

We will regularly review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives

Our equality objectives The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of our equality information and other evidence. Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages.

Aim: To meet the key principles of the 2010 Equality Act and our Christian responsibility by having measurable objectives that will span the next four years (specific duties)

Objective 1: we will achieve this by promoting the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child through the planned curriculum, assemblies, our relationships with all and in the daily life of the school. (2020– 2024)

In 1989, governments across the world promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The convention says what communities must do so that all children:

- grow as healthy as possible;
- can learn at school;
- are protected;
- have their views listened to; and
- are treated fairly.

These are the rights of the children at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and are the basis for all that we are committed to achieve for our children.

Objective 2: We will review our Relationships and Sex Education and our PSHE policies and ensure that it meets both Government requirement and the ethos of the School whilst it remains inclusive to the needs of the diversity families that make up our school. (2021 –2025)

Objective 3: In reviewing new reading materials, we will ensure that the texts that we choose are reflective of a diverse society and, in particular, of our own community. (2021– 2025)

Objective 4: In reviewing the breadth of our curriculum, we will ensure that there are ample opportunities to expose children to historical and scientific perspectives from a range of cultures, ethnic backgrounds, from both male and female perspectives, including individuals with disabilities (remembering that some disabilities are less visible.) (2021 –2025)

APPENDIX 1
Sacred Heart CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
EQUALITIES INFORMATION FOR STAKE-HOLDERS
COMPILED JANUARY 2024

We have tried to make this information as accessible as possible and should you require any further information please do contact the Headteacher via the school office.

The Governing Body are keen to receive any feedback on the quality of the information that you have received through this document.

All parents and carers are encouraged to share information with us relating to the protected characteristics in order that we are able to meet their needs. Any information shared will always be treated in the strictest confidence.

1.0 General school context

With 201 pupils on roll, the school is an average 1 form entry Catholic Primary School. Although situated in Ware, we attract pupils from a range of different wards across East Herts.

2.0 Disability

Built in the 1970, the physical environment of the school can be challenging to ensure full accessibility. However, physical access to all areas of both building and the grounds can be accessed, although a longer planned route may be needed.

Accessibility issues are always taken into consideration when the building is modified, updated or extended.

An accessible toilet exists in the Year 4 building and in the original building.

There is a designated disabled parking bay in the school car park and entrance to the school has been adapted for wheelchair users.

3.0 Gender

The current school gender balance is: 56% Female 44% Male

There are girl heavy cohorts in Key Stage 1; class teachers are aware how this may impact upon dynamics and respond carefully to the needs that this may create.

Achievement and progress of boys and girls is monitored closely.

In 2019 at the end of KS2 both boys and girls achieved above the national average.

The performance of girls in reading and writing outperform the boys; in maths boys outperformed the girls. At greater depth, boys performed better than girls in writing (+18%) and maths (+24%).

In 2019 at the end of KS1 both boys and girls achieved above the national average.

The performance of girls in reading and maths outperform the boys by 7%. At greater depth girls outperform boys in reading by 15% but in maths, boys outperform girls by 6%

This is currently being monitored and will inform future actions.

We continue to develop strategies to set high expectations to all, regardless of gender.

Equality of opportunity is promoted for all activities. There are, however, some occasions in sport where a league that is entered has its own age appropriate rules about participation. These rules are adhered to. However, opportunities for participation in a wide range of sports through the curriculum and clubs is offered to all pupils.

4.0 Gender identity and reassignment

Pupils are taught about the negative impact of gender stereotypes/expectations on individuals and groups. Any issues, particularly relating to language and attitudes, are dealt with proactively and confidently by all staff.

Our Relationships and Sex Education Policy and scheme of work has been updated following statutory guidelines from the Government and Diocesan advice. The curriculum actively challenges stereotyping in all its forms, especially in relation to gender or sexual identity. The unique value of all people underpins all aspects of RSE policy and provision.

5.0 Race and ethnicity

5.1 Minority ethnic groups

When a child starts at the school the parent indicates their child's ethnic group. 21% of the student population are from a minority ethnic group, with 12 of the 18 recognised ethnic groups represented. The diversity of our community enhances our school. The curriculum provides opportunities to explore and celebrate the diversity of the school. Diversity is actively celebrated through participation in events such as Black History Month and throughout our curriculum.

Any incidents of a racial nature are dealt with according to school policy and are dealt with quickly, fairly and with sensitivity. Full records are kept of any incidents. Such incidents are of a very rare nature and data relating to this is presented to the Governing Body through a termly Headteacher's Report.

The school curriculum, through PSHE, RE and other curriculum links aims to widen pupils' horizons, celebrate diversity and tackle any misconceptions.

5.2 Pupils for whom English is not their first language (EAL)

20% of pupils have a first language which is not English. Some pupils begin their journey at school with no English at all.

Both KS1 and KS2 these students perform well and above the national average for this group, a large proportion achieving beyond expected progress rates by the end of KS2. Rigorous assessment procedures for pupils with EAL are in place (including WellComm Screening and Speech Links) and this has enabled us to accelerate the progress of such pupils very early on. Targeted interventions and a focus on developing the language-rich immersive learning environment ensures rapid progress. Achievement of this group continues to be monitored very carefully.

6.0 Pregnancy and maternity

The school is always keen to accommodate the particular needs of nursing / pregnant visitors and staff and the school makes every effort to ensure that adequate accommodation is offered for this. Staff returning to work following maternity leave are supported on an individual basis.

7.0 Religion and belief

The religious makeup of the student population is as follows:

66% Catholic

10% Other Christian

7% Other faith

16% No faith background

Non-Catholic pupils (and particularly those of non-Christian faiths) currently form a small group in our school and as such staff are aware that they could potentially be vulnerable; staff ensure, therefore, that they do not become isolated by recognising and valuing all Christian traditions.

All pupils are involved fully in the life of the school and there is an 'open door' policy to ensure a warm welcome for all families.

As part of curriculum RE all pupils from Yr 1 to Year 6 gain a growing knowledge of Judaism linking Jesus as a Jew to their understanding); In the EYFS and KS1 a growing understanding of world festivals develops, enabling pupils as they move into KS2 to explore World faiths more specifically through the RE curriculum. In the RE scheme, as pupils get older, they consider the views of a whole range of Christian denominations on key liturgical and social issues as well as a Catholic viewpoint. This aims to ensure that they have a breadth of experience of world faiths and that they are not isolated in thinking that everyone believes the same things as them. They also consider the views of those who do not subscribe to any faith as part of their curriculum RE response.

8.0 Sexual orientation

Curricular work to prevent unintentional harassment, e.g. the use of homo/bi/transphobic language, has raised awareness amongst older pupils of the need to think carefully about the consequences of words and actions used and their impact upon others. Any incidents of homo/bi/transphobic language are dealt with swiftly, sensitively and with confidence by all staff. Data relating to such incidents are reported to the Governing Body via the Headteacher's Termly Report to Governors.

A new Relationships and Sex Education Policy and Scheme, Life to the Full, will involve the representation of diverse and blended families in the images used. Healthy discussion is encouraged about the diversity of family types in a non-judgmental and fully inclusive manner.

9.0 Special Educational Needs

18.6 % of pupils are on the SEND register

14% of pupils have school based support

2.5% of pupils have an Education Health Care Plan EHCP (formerly statement)

The school invests significantly in the support of Special Educational Needs. We constantly wish to improve the rate of progress for identified pupils with SEND so that such pupils compare favourably with similar pupils nationally; however many pupils have very complex needs and often the reported data is not able to reflect the progress that has been made. School data suggests that interventions for these pupils have an excellent impact on their learning and progress.

This group continues to be monitored very closely; their progress is monitored carefully by the SENDCo who reports to the SEND Governor on a termly basis. Their smaller steps of progress demonstrate good progress based upon their starting points, particularly for those with very complex needs.

10.0 Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)

Currently the Government funds a proportion of the school budget based upon the number of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (Pupil Premium). This is because nationally, the statistics suggest that this group of pupils do not perform as highly as other pupils. This has been complicated by universal Free School Meals being made available to all infant children.

In our school the uptake of PPG is low (9%) when compared with the national figure (19.7%), however the school percentage has doubled since December 2020. As the group is so small, it can be hard to compare the performance of this group against the national figures. We continue to monitor the progress of this group of pupils and aim to improve their rate of progress. Across the school, most disadvantaged pupils are working at broadly ARE in reading and mathematics.

However, some of these pupils also have learning needs. Generally, school tracking data indicates that over the last three years individuals in this group achieve well from their individual starting points. A nominated Pupil Premium Governor ensures that the progress of this group is closely monitored and that funding received is beneficial to these pupils.

11.0 Attendance

The vast majority of minority ethnic groups have an attendance figure which is higher than that of the White British group. The attendance of boys and girls is similar. Pupil premium children have an attendance rate that is slightly lower than non-pupil premium children (91.4% as opposed to 95.3%). Children with SEND have an attendance figure of 91.5% compared to non-SEN children with 95.7%. Attendance is fairly consistent across all classes. This data continues to be monitored very carefully and robust protocols are adhered to in order to ensure that attendance is valued. Parents are kept regularly informed of attendance data and are supported to improve attendance where appropriate.

12.0 Bullying

Incidents of bullying and harassment are extremely rare but are recorded and monitored according to the school policy and data relating to this is reported to the Governing Body via the Headteacher's Termly Report. We always aim to identify problems before they reach such an extreme stage. They are also monitored according to groups involved. A proactive approach by the school supports this, including:

- Regular PSHE lessons which focus on bullying, hurtful behaviour and positive relationships;
- The use of play buddies as appropriate for younger pupils;
- Communication boxes in each classroom;
- Protective Behaviours work
- Monitored interventions for vulnerable pupils;
- Training and briefing updates for staff;
- Time to Talk facility for pupils with staff
- An open-door policy for parents and pupils.

There are currently no patterns involving particular groups in this data set.

