

OUR LADY'S
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL



Equality Policy

(including Equality Objectives)

Approved by:

Full Committee

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1. Introduction

Our Lady's Catholic High School is committed to the practice of equal opportunities and the concept of equality is embedded throughout all school practices and policies.

In line with our mission statement, "Our Lady's Catholic High School enables all in our school community to achieve their highest potential and prepares our students to become compassionate and caring citizens, aware of their global responsibilities.", the worth of each individual lies at the heart of our Equality Policy.

The school's aim is to provide for all students, irrespective of ethnic origins or ability, enabling each one to fulfil their learning potential with education that meets their needs, on occasion, this may result from positive discrimination. Students are valued for themselves and the school is a place where the dignity and capacity of each person is respected.

The school will promote the principles of fairness and justice; all members of the school community, students, parents/carers, visitors, governors and staff will be treated with equal respect and provided with opportunities to achieve.

As a Roman Catholic school, our policies and procedures follow guidelines from the Westminster Diocese and current legislation which are also included in the school development plan, self evaluation review, the school prospectus and website.

2. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

3. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, students and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in appendix 3.

5. Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

6. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Produce attainment data each academic year to determine how students with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the attainment data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and incorporate this in the school development priorities
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups identified

7. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, students will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. ***For example, Black History themed assemblies.***
- Holding Information sessions for parents dealing with relevant issues. ***For example, Social Media education sessions.***
- Working with our local community and city community. ***For example, organising school trips and activities in our local community, bringing ex-students back as guest speakers, inviting representatives of the local community as guest speakers.***
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach. ***For example, those who have volunteered for our Careers Carousel***

9. Monitoring arrangements

- The Headteacher will update the equality information we publish at least every year.
- This document will be reviewed by Governing Board at least every 4 years.
- This document will be approved by Governing Board

Appendix 1: Protected Characteristics

There are **nine** protected characteristics in the Equality Act. Discrimination which happens because of one or more of these characteristics is unlawful under the Act. We all have some of these characteristics - for example, sex or age - so the Act protects everyone from discrimination

The Duty listed the relevant protected characteristics:

1. **Age:** The Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it (for example if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim). Age is the only protected characteristics that allow employers to justify direct discrimination.
2. **Disability:** The Act applies to a range of people that have a condition (physical or mental) which has a significant and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out 'normal' day-to-day activities,
3. **Gender Reassignment:** The definition has been expanded to include people who chose to live in the opposite gender to the gender assigned to them at birth by removing the previously legal requirement for them to undergo medical supervision.
4. **Pregnancy and Maternity:** A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy (and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled in regards to employment).
5. **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.
6. **Race:** Under the purposes of the Act, 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their race.
7. **Religion or Belief:** In the Equality Act, religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.
8. **Sex/Gender:** Refers to a natural or biological feature, male or female.
9. **Sexual Orientation:** Refers to the attraction you feel towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who you form intimate relationships with or are attracted to. The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics", which applies to the school as employers and not part of the school provisions related to students.

Appendix 2: Policies and Evidence

	Policies / evidence
What evidence do we hold that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	<p>Mission Statement</p> <p>Equality Policy</p> <p>Behaviour policy</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Inclusion policy</p> <p>Recruitment policy</p> <p>ICT policy (re social networking)</p> <p>Pupil premium statement</p> <p>Risk assessments</p> <p><i>(Note- protected posts on basis of religion are HT, DHT and Head of RE)</i></p>
How do we advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?	<p>Access arrangements / medical plans in place, reviewed as required</p> <p>Phased return for staff, when required</p> <p>Education and training of staff at Staff INSET and other forums</p> <p>Pregnant students remain in school and receive appropriate support</p> <p>Participation in all extra-curricular activities is monitored by HoY to encourage equality of opportunity</p> <p>Monitoring of pupil premium spend data</p>
How do we foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?	<p>Mission statement and living our Servite values are central to fostering good relationships between all groups</p> <p>School performance / behaviour / attendance/bullying/ racist incident/ exclusion data available for all groups</p> <p>Curriculum across all subject areas supports understanding / tolerance / respect</p>

Appendix 3: Equality Objective

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (PSED) places a duty for schools to prepare and publish one or more measurable equality objective at least every four years.

Equality Objective: 1	Ensure the attainment of disadvantaged students is higher than those nationally and close to that of non-disadvantaged within the school.
Aims/ Impact/ Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustain the high achievement of PP students ● Closely monitor progress and attainment ● Plan and implement interventions as required

Equality Objective: 2	Improve positive family engagement with parents and carers.
Aims/ Impact/ Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved outcomes - may need to analyse at student level as small cohort ● Identify agencies and support outside the school context ● Plan and implement interventions as required ● Evaluate and develop communication methods with families

Equality Objective: 3	Promotion of cultural understanding and awareness of different ethnic groups within our school community.
Aims/ Impact/ Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wider range of activities under the umbrella of Black History Month ● Student Voice (School Council) listened to in selecting and developing activities to celebrate diversity ● Ensure Citizenship curriculum addresses needs of diverse intake

Appendix 4: Equalities statement for the website

This statement forms part of the Equality Policy and also makes reference to the Public Sector Equality Duty

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The school's aim is to provide for all students, irrespective of ethnic origins or ability, enabling each one to fulfil their learning potential with education that meets their needs. students are valued for themselves and the school is a place where the dignity and capacity of each person is respected.

The school will promote the principles of fairness and justice; all members of the school community, students, parents/carers, visitors, governors and staff will be treated with equal respect and provided with opportunities to achieve.

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (PSED) provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity as well as addressing the statutory areas of:

- A. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.**
- B. Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups.**
- C. Fostering good relations between different groups.**

The Public Sector Equality Duty also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups, since breaking down barriers to learning, and increasing life choices for all students, is a key part of our vision.