

Equality Policy 2013-14



**St Francis Xavier
Catholic Primary School**

Updated February 2014

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

Single Equality Policy

Monitor and Review

Every three years, we will review our objectives in relation to any changes in our school profile. Our objectives will sit in our overall school improvement plan and therefore will be reviewed as part of this process.

Date Approved by the Governing Body **March 2014**

Date to be reviewed by the Governing Body **March 2015**

Legal Duties

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees only),
- disability
- race (includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- gender (including issues of transgender)
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief (includes lack of belief)
- sexual identity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to do some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish equality Information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions

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We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child

- Prepare and publish equality objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- recognise and respect diversity;
- foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging;
- observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development;
- aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers;
- consult and involve widely;
- strive to ensure that society will benefit.

Our mission statement - *'Jesus holds us in the palm of His hand'*

God in His love has created each one of us as unique. God is therefore at the very heart of our school. Each member of our school community, adults and children, are on a journey.

It is our role to teach the message of the Gospels. The Gospel values of trust, honesty, forgiveness, loving and caring for one another are part of our everyday life.

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Our entire curriculum must reflect these values and in our search for excellence each individual must be encouraged to use God's gifts fully to reach his / her potential.

Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

This school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur we address them immediately and report them to the local authority using their guidance material. The local authority may provide some support.

Responsibility

We believe that promoting Equality is the whole schools responsibility:

School Community	Responsibility
Governing body	Involving and engaging the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these.
Head teacher/Principal	As above including: Promoting key messages to staff, parents and pupils about equality and what is expected of them and can be expected from the school in carrying out its day to day duties. Ensure that staff have appropriate skills to deliver equality, including pupil awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Senior Management Team	To support the Head/Principal as above Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Teaching staff	Help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils. Uphold the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated. Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Non Teaching Staff	Support the school and the governing body in delivering a

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School Community	Responsibility
	<p>fair and equitable service to all stakeholders</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made by the head teacher/principal on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated</p> <p>Support colleagues within the school community</p> <p>Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents</p>
Parents	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these</p> <p>Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p>
Pupils	<p>Supporting the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality.</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made by the head teacher on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.</p>
Local community members	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these</p> <p>Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p>

We will ensure that the whole school community is aware of the Single Equality Policy and our published equality information and equality objectives by publishing them on our school website at:

www.st-francisxavier.sandwell.sch.uk

Complaints

Complaints with regard to this policy will be dealt with via the schools complaints procedure, a copy of which is available from the school office and is also downloadable from our website.

Further guidance for parents and carers and school governors on the Equality Act 2010 can be found on Sandwell Equality Virtual Office:

<http://www.lea.sandwell.gov.uk/members/bulletin/virtual-offices/equality/index.html>

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Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Duties under the Equality Act require the governing body to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, parents, carers, staff and other people who use the school or may wish to; and
- Prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties

Since September 2002, the governing body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This scheme also sets out the proposals of the governing body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Section 1:

1.1 The purpose and direction of the school's scheme: vision and values (the ethos of the scheme)

Through partnerships with local communities, St Francis Catholic Primary School will strive to create a happy, safe, inclusive and challenging learning environment that develops independent, healthy and confident learners. We will ensure that all our learners, including those with a disability, aspire to the highest of standards, are economically aware, and make a positive contribution to the wider world.

In order to enjoy and access a balanced, rigorous and inclusive curriculum through which children learn effectively the staff and governors aim to work with the wider school community partners to:

- Promote equal opportunities for all as an inclusive school regardless of disability, race, gender or culture and make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum where required to cater for the needs of all pupils.
- Set high standards and targets for all pupils including those with a disability.
- Strive to achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum.
- Nurture an awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils.

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- Provide opportunities for everyone to make a positive contribution to the community and wider world.
- Foster lively, enquiring, self-challenging minds through challenging and diverse learning methods.
- Develop pupil collaboration and independent learning opportunities.
- Make sure that all pupils are happy and fulfilled having a positive self-esteem.
- Ensure that pupils understand social responsibilities within the wider community know their boundaries and are mutually respectful.
- Celebrate achievement as well as attainment of all pupils.
- Equip all of our pupils with the necessary life-skills and become literate and numerate in order to gain a lifelong means of communication.
- Promote positive attitudes in pupils to enable them to develop socially, morally and spiritually so that they can make the right choices to stay safe.
- In relation to disabled parents, staff and members of the community who use our school we wish to ensure access and inclusion to the school's services so that they have equality of access and usage with non- disabled parents, staff and members of the community who use our school.

The school has set the following priorities for the development of the vision and values that inform the plan:

- Update our vision and values in the light of consultation with all stakeholders (including pupils, parents, staff and governors) to extend opportunities for all.
- To provide appropriate induction for all new staff and governors.
- Ensure that all staff have had appropriate disability awareness training

1.2 Involvement of disabled pupils, parents/ carers, staff and other users of the school

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS:

CATEGORY	CHARACTERISTICS
FSM	27.6% in line with the national average
SEN	School Action / School Action Plus / Statements – 27% higher than the national average
EAL	37% higher than the national average
STABILITY	86% in line with national average
ATTENDANCE (2012-13)	94.9%
MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS	38% White British – well below the national average
PUPILS WITH DISABILITY	4 pupils, 1 adult
PUPILS WITH DISABILITY (PRE-SCHOOL)	1 pupils, 0 adults

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The number of pupils known to be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) is in line with the national average.

Attendance of our pupils is carefully monitored. Authorised absences are in line with national expectations. Parents are kept fully informed and contacted if there is an issue regarding attendance. The APO service is used to support attendance.

Pupil Mobility varies with each year group. There is a correlation between mobility and attainment.

The School Deprivation Indicator is higher than the national average. The school population is a mix of those who own their own homes and those in rented property.

There have been no pupil exclusions in the last three academic years.

Disabled Pupil Presence, Participation and Achievement:

- Pupils made at least expected progress (3APS) or better in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.
- All pupils participated in all curriculum activities and visits.
- Attendance is in line with other groups in the school.

Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

St Francis Xavier Catholic School currently consults with:

- All parents whose children receive additional support for SEN.
- With pupils through the parent consultation meetings, consultation meetings and the school council.

However a more detailed consultation on disability needs to be undertaken when appropriate.

For the purposes of this plan we will continue to consult with:

- Pupils with disabilities in the school (Where applicable)
- Parents of those children Where applicable)
- School staff
- Community disability groups
- The Local Authority Support Services
- Parents and Pupils who receive SEN Support

1.3 The school has set the following priorities in respect of consultation on the scheme:

- Consultation with pupils and parents will be focused through the termly review meetings already in place (IEPs and statements)
- Consideration will be given to co-opting a disability representative onto the school governing body (if such a representative can be found)
- Continuing consideration of how to make the consultation accessible to all participants

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- Ensuring that fire evacuation procedures and safety precautions are accessible to disabled person/s (where and when they should be needed).
- Implementing a policy for personal development in relation to toileting / continence to ensure the school meets the needs of pupils with delayed personal development in relation to continence.

1.4 Impact Assessment

We will carry out a systematic review over time of all policies. As each policy is reviewed we will evaluate the positive and negative impact on disabled pupils, staff, parents / carers and people who use the school or may wish to do so. This evaluation will inform policy change that will be agreed by governors and disseminated to the entire school community. All parents / carers, pupils, staff, people who use the school or may wish to do so (including those who are disabled) in policy review takes place as part of our school improvement planning. Questionnaires and follow up meetings take place at least annually.

As each policy is reviewed the SENCO and Special Needs Governor and in turn the governing body in consultation with the senior leadership of the school will carry out the impact assessment.

Curricular policies are reviewed regularly in line with the framework agreed and published by governors. Non curriculum policies are reviewed on an annual basis.

Section 2:

Priorities for St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School in meeting the general duty

The school aims to meet the general duty by:

- (i) Promoting equality of opportunity
- (ii) Eliminating discrimination
- (iii) Eliminating bullying / harassment
- (iv) Promoting positive attitudes to disability
- (v) Encouraging participation in work and social life
- (vi) Steps to meet needs including more favourable treatment where this would create overall equality

(vii) As stated in section 1.1 our vision is of a fully inclusive school with equal opportunities for all underpinned by the principles of the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement. Curriculum area plans and schemes of work will need to be scrutinised to ensure that suggested activities are accessible to all pupils and that reasonable adjustments have been made. Curriculum in this context goes beyond the 'taught' curriculum and is taken to encompass all activities undertaken during an extended school day. In relation to disabled parents, staff and members of the community who use our school we wish to ensure access and inclusion to the school's services so that they have equality of access and usage with non- disabled parents, staff and members of the community who use our school.

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High quality teaching and learning for all is a priority in the school improvement plan. Raising the quality of teaching for disabled pupils will be a significant step towards achieving this aim. The SENCO and other senior leaders in the school include improving outcomes for pupils with SEN and disability as part of their monitoring role. The SENCO in this school is given release time to undertake this important role.

Data collection and consultation will raise issues of progress and participation, which will need to be addressed over the lifetime of this plan (see priorities below).

The school has set the following overall priorities for increasing curriculum access:

- Development of a new national curriculum and strategies to increase access for pupils working substantially below expected levels using intervention strategies.
- Working with local authority advisers to ensure that maximum use is being made of technology to maximise progress and opportunity for all
- Work with LA advisers and local special schools to remove specific barriers for disabled pupils in relation to PE and outdoor activities should there be any disabled pupils.
- A rolling programme of curriculum area reviews will be undertaken to ensure that concerns relating to disability have been addressed.

(viii) Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

The physical environment of the school and surrounding areas can be a significant barrier to participation in educational activities for any disabled pupils. The school is committed to removing these barriers as part of its vision of an inclusive school and preparation for the future.

The recent physical access audit undertaken in the school has identified the following areas for improvement:

- access and egress from upper floors,
- unsuitability of pupil toilets
- Split level floor in hall.

As a voluntary aided school bids will be made for LCVAP funds to address these needs

The school has set the following priorities for physical improvements to increase access:

- As above from physical audit

(ix) Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

As part of our curriculum review detailed above the school will look at all information provided in writing to pupils. This includes:

- Home Learning
- Timetables
- Worksheets
- Teacher feedback and marking of work

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- Notices
- Tests
- Whiteboards

The school has set the following priorities for providing information for disabled pupils:

- Training from support services on the availability and use of different formats (e.g. audio taping, symbols, large print, use of colour, Braille, BSL) (as and when appropriate)
- Exploring technological solutions to information access with appropriate support services
- Ensuring school website has options for a variety of formats.

Section 3:

3.1 Implementation

Overall responsibility for the school's accessibility plan lies with the governing body, but improving access for disabled pupils requires everyone at the school to understand the duties in the Equality Act and apply this knowledge in their own area of responsibility: the head teacher, learning support assistants, class and subject teachers, dinner staff, the SENCO, the premises manager, curriculum coordinators, administrative staff and governors themselves.

Equality Act training will be undertaken by all teaching staff as and when identified. As identified earlier in the plan, ancillary staff, governors and NQTs/new staff joining the school will need this training. The SEN Governor has agreed to incorporate the monitoring of the implementation of this plan into her brief. The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate resources are made available from within the schools own budget and from other funding streams such as Schools Access Initiative.

The Head teacher will take responsibility for ensuring that this plan is co-ordinated with other plans and policies across the school (SEN, Curriculum, Asset Management, Equal Opportunities, and Professional Development).

Evaluation

The impact of the plan will be evaluated annually and will be judged against the following outcomes:

- increased confidence of staff in differentiating the curriculum for disabled pupils;
- greater pupil and parental satisfaction with the arrangements made;
- improved outcomes for disabled pupils;
- improvements in the physical environment of the school;
- protocols for multi-agency working to support children with medical needs;
- teachers sharing good practice within the school, the school sharing good practice with others;
- any disabled pupils being more involved in whole life of the school.

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- Any disabled adults who are part of the community being more involved in whole life of the school

The school has set the following priorities for the management, coordination and implementation of the accessibility plan:

- Identify available funding streams to increase access
- Training for all staff
- Co-ordinate plan with other school plans and policies
- Implement effective monitoring and evaluation of the plan

3.2 Publication

It is intended to make the school's plan a model of accessibility. We have tried to keep jargon and acronyms to a minimum. The plan will be made available in the following ways:

- Directly to parents in the school prospectus
- As an appendix to the school improvement plan
- Downloadable from the school's website
- On request in a variety of formats e.g.
 - on different coloured paper or in a different coloured font
 - audio
 - extra large print

The school has set the following priority for making its plan available:

- Liaison with local support services and voluntary agencies for advice on the production of the plan in different formats.

3.3 Reviewing and Revising this scheme

This scheme will be reviewed annually in line with the school improvement planning process. This version of the scheme is valid for three years after which time it will be rewritten. Revisions after each review will be made annually. The timescale below identifies the procedure for annual review to this version of the scheme.

The school has set the following priorities for making its plan available:

- The plan to be made available in Braille and a range of other languages.

3c: Further information

- Information on arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities can be found in the Admission Policy (see note 1)
- St Francis Xavier is a fully inclusive school – no adult or child is disadvantaged because of race, gender or disability.
- There is now access for disabled users to every entrance of the school via ramped entrances or sloped areas including the nursery site. A ramp has been provided to the main entrance for improved access.

See Appendix 1 – School Accessibility Plan 2013-14