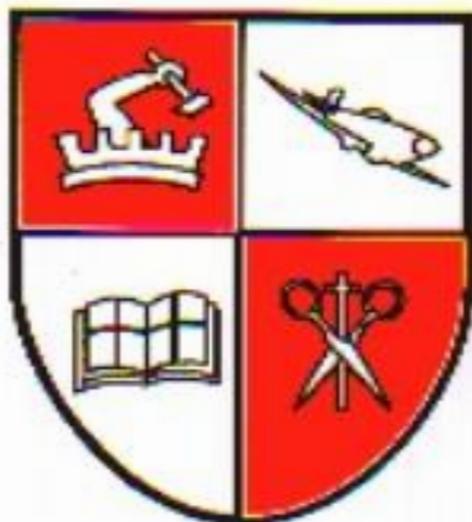


# ST. GERARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACTION PLAN 2015-2019

### Our Mission Statement

*'With Christ at our side and St Gerard as our guide, we strive for perfection.'*

St Gerard's school motto, reinforces our Mission Statement in a child friendly way.

*'We live, love and learn together with Jesus.'*

Reviewed: October 2017



## St Gerard's Catholic Primary School Equality Information

This policy reflects the *Equality Act 2010*, which harmonises and replaces previous legislation, including the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (ie Race) and Gender. Through this policy St Gerard's School will fulfil its public duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity and, where appropriate, age (applicable to employees only). The guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff and governors and also to visitors to the school.

### **Legal framework**

Duties as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and its *Schedules*: there are nine equality strands (known as Protected Characteristics), as follows:

Disability

Ethnicity (including Gypsy and Traveller groups)

Gender

Gender identity and transgender

Faith, religion and belief

Marriage and civil partnership

Sexual orientation (homophobia)

Pregnancy and maternity

Age

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. St Gerard's School will seek to achieve positive action in respect of the Act.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a format for addressing the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2010. This supersedes and brings together all previous statutory duties in relation to race, gender and disability and also addresses the duty to promote community cohesion, thus meeting the school's duties in these areas.

The plan also highlights how our school has worked with and listened to the staff, pupils, parents and carers to inform development of action plans and the need and commitment required to ensure the scheme is a success. This is underpinned by a commitment to promoting positive relationships and understanding between all groups within our school community.

This document sets out how pupils with the following protected characteristics (previously known as equality strands) will be protected in our school from harassment and discrimination:-

- disability.
- gender.
- religion and belief.
- sexual orientation.
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy

**It should be noted that all schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties, and failure to do so could result in legal action against the School's Governing Body. Employees of the school, acting on behalf of the Governing Body, are also liable for their own discriminatory actions.**

St Gerard's School is mindful of the *Public Sector Equality Duty*, which came into force on 5 April 2011, and will publish relevant information on the School's website. It will

- (i) collect and review employment information in line with the Equality Act
- (ii) publish the *School's Equality Objectives* and monitor and report on these annually.

### **Good practice**

1. We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged with the school.
2. We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the world communities.
3. We support 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*.
4. We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the Local Authority. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, eg homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs.

## **Guiding principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations and establishing our school ethos, we are guided by 9 principles:

### ***Principle 1: All learners are of equal value***

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender or gender identity
- whatever their sexual identity

### ***Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference***

Treating people equally (*Principle 1* above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background and of the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experience of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised
  
- sexual identity

### ***Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging***

Policies, procedures and activities will promote:

- positive attitudes and actions towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

### ***Principle 4: we observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development***

Policies and procedures will benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

***Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist***

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- gay people as well as heterosexual

***Principle 6: We consult and involve widely***

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. Consultation involves:

- disabled and non-disabled
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- gay people as well as heterosexual

***Principle 7: We address prejudice and prejudice-related bullying***

We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties listed above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudice reflecting sexism or homophobia

***Principle 8: Society as a whole should benefit***

Policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- the disabled and non-disabled
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- gay people as well as heterosexual

***Principle 9: Objectives***

Each year we shall formulate and publish specific and measurable equality objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published, in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

## **Arrangements, roles and responsibilities**

1. The equality objectives of St Gerard's School are set out formally and will be reviewed annually refreshed on a four – year cycle.
2. The equality employment information will be monitored and reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.
3. St Gerard's School will undertake Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) exercises when renewing or reviewing policy or practice to ensure full compliance with the Equality Act 2011.

### ***Curriculum***

4. 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 equality groups are supported positively.
5. All other data relating to whole-school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that groups are supported positively.
6. When it is reviewed, each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our Guiding Principles as set out above.

### ***Staff and Governors***

7. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the School complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
8. A member of the Governing Body has the role of monitoring the implementation of this policy.
9. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
10. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of this policy.
11. All staff are expected to:
  - adhere to this policy
  - promote equality and inclusion in their classrooms, amongst colleagues and with visitors to the school
  - deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
  - plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the School's Guiding Principles
  - provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that support better understanding of equality groups and any issues that may arise, eg attendance, bullying, exclusion
  - undertake or support Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) processes
  - **attend appropriate training to enable St Gerard's School to keep itself up to date with equality issues.**

12. All staff and Governors will have access to training and a selection of resources which discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion. The School values the opportunity to take a holistic approach in fulfilling its Equality Duties.

13. All staff and Governors will exercise their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of Human Rights is addressed immediately.

14. St Gerard's School is opposed to all forms of prejudice that could act as a barrier to the fulfilling of its legal duties and the fostering of community cohesion.

Factors which such prejudice might reflect include:

- disability
- special educational needs
- racism and xenophobia
- gender and transgender
- religious groups and communities
- Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Sexism and homophobia

St Gerard's School recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care.

Date approved by Governing Body: October 2017

Date to be reviewed: October 2018