



EQUALITY POLICY

St Mary's RC Primary School, Burnley

Equality Policy

Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Headteacher: Mrs Laura Bushell

Deputy Headteacher & SENDCo: Mrs Mary Haida

Our Commitment

At St Mary's RC Primary School, our mission is to "Learn and Grow Together in Christ". Guided by our Catholic faith, we recognise the unique dignity and worth of every individual as a child of God. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and creating an inclusive environment where every member of our school community feels respected, supported and able to succeed. Our motto, "Every Child, Every Chance", reflects our commitment to removing barriers and ensuring that all pupils can achieve, belong and thrive.

We are committed to ensuring that all members of our community have equal opportunities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from every aspect of school life. Through our Catholic mission and values, we promote fairness, dignity and respect, striving to eliminate discrimination and inequality wherever they arise.

We aim to create an environment in which every child can achieve their potential and flourish spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements under:

- **The Equality Act (2010)**, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects individuals from discrimination.
- **The Equality Act (2010) (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011**, which require schools to publish equality information and objectives.
- **Department for Education (DfE) guidance:** *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools*.

We welcome our general duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We also recognise our specific duties to:

- Publish information annually showing how we are meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Publish measurable equality objectives every four years to reduce inequality and promote inclusion.

Our Aims

At St Mary's, we are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity.
- Removing barriers to participation and achievement.
- Creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all.
- Ensuring that the curriculum, resources and learning opportunities reflect and promote equality, inclusion and mutual respect.

- Building positive relationships across our community and beyond.

We understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, recognising and valuing their differences. Achieving equality may require us to make reasonable adjustments or provide additional support so that all members of our community can thrive.

Advancing Equality at St Mary's

We will:

- Ensure all pupils have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to school life.
- Promote equal access to all areas of learning, enrichment and extracurricular activities.
- Celebrate diversity and promote role models that reflect the richness of our community.
- Raise awareness and understanding of equality and inclusion through the curriculum, assemblies, and events.
- Monitor pupil progress, attendance, participation and wellbeing by gender, ethnicity, disability, disadvantage and other vulnerable groups, taking action where gaps or barriers are identified.
- Address attendance disparities for vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium, and those with social or emotional barriers to learning.

Eliminating Discrimination

We are aware of our obligations under the Equality Act (2010) and comply fully with all non-discrimination provisions.

All school policies and practices are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect equality principles.

Staff and governors receive regular training and updates on the Equality Act and its implications for their role. New staff are introduced to the school's equality commitments during induction, and refresher training is provided annually.

Incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying are not tolerated and are dealt with in line with the school's safeguarding and behaviour policies.

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

We aim to remove or minimise disadvantages connected to protected characteristics and take proactive steps to meet the particular needs of individuals and groups.

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we recognise that equality does not always mean treating everybody in exactly the same way. In order to give *"Every Child, Every Chance"*, we seek to identify and remove barriers to learning, participation and wellbeing so that all pupils can access the opportunities available to them.

We do this by:

- Analysing attainment, attendance, behaviour and participation data to identify and address gaps and barriers.
- Supporting pupils with additional needs through targeted intervention, adaptive teaching and pastoral support.
- Encouraging underrepresented groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life, including leadership opportunities, enrichment activities and educational visits.
- Making reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access to the curriculum, physical environment and information.
- Working closely with families, external professionals and other agencies to secure support for pupils who require it.
- Providing accessible resources, technology and learning environments where appropriate.
- Promoting positive wellbeing and belonging through our pastoral and inclusive practices.

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve, belong and thrive within our school community.

Fostering Good Relations

We promote a culture of kindness, tolerance and respect through:

- Curriculum content that reflects a diverse society, including teaching in RE, RSHE, Picture News, and English.
- Assemblies and events celebrating different cultures, faiths, and global awareness.

- Visits and visitors that build community understanding and appreciation of difference.
- Partnership work with local community groups and faith leaders.

We encourage pupils to take a lead in promoting equality and inclusion through pupil voice, peer mentoring, and social action projects.

Equality in Decision-Making

Equality considerations are taken into account whenever significant decisions are made, such as policy reviews, staffing, curriculum changes or school events.

When planning activities or trips, we ensure:

- Accessibility for pupils with disabilities.
- Sensitivity to cultural and religious observances.
- Opportunities for all pupils to participate and succeed.

Our School Community

In addition to pupils with protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act (2010), we also monitor and support other vulnerable groups, including:

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- Young carers
- Pupils with medical or mental health needs
- Pupils from military families
- Pupils experiencing persistent absence
- Pupils affected by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)

This broader approach ensures that our provision meets the needs of every learner and that no child is disadvantaged.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensures this policy and the Accessibility and Equality objectives are published and reviewed regularly.
- Monitors compliance with the Equality Act and the impact of the school's equality work.
- Promotes an ethos of inclusion and respect across the school.

Headteacher

- Implements the Equality Policy and ensures that staff and pupils are aware of their responsibilities.
- Reports regularly to governors on Accessibility and Equality objectives and outcomes.
- Identifies staff training needs and ensures ongoing professional development.

Staff

- Promote equality through their teaching, relationships and daily practice.
- Model inclusive values and challenge discrimination or stereotyping.
- Support the aims and objectives of this policy in their day-to-day work.

Pupils and Parents

- Are encouraged to engage in promoting equality and respect.
- Are invited to share their views and experiences to help shape school improvement.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Governing Body will review the equality information and objectives annually. The full Equality Policy will be formally reviewed every four years.

Progress will be reported to governors and published on the school website.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Accessibility Policy
- Accessibility and Equality Objectives
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- School Improvement Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Approved by Governors:

Mrs Mary Haida - Deputy Headteacher and SENDCo

Mrs Kirsty Flynn - SEND Consultant

Mrs Laura Bushell - Headteacher