

St Nicholas' Primary



Equality Policy

March 2022

Draft

Whole School Equalities Policy

Rationale

St Nicholas' is a Catholic primary school.

Our Mission Statement focuses on the school as part of the faith community. We emphasise in all of our public platforms that our Catholic school has the life and teaching of Jesus Christ as its foundation. Through the ethos of the school we will endeavour to work with the children so that they will come to know Jesus Christ as a person and a friend who guides them through life. We work towards helping each person in the school community to grow in fullness to develop, mature and fulfil their potential.

Pupils in our school will learn how to interact with other's positively, to work and play co-operatively, to share new experiences and respect each other's differences.

We aim to work with parents and parish members to teach the Catholic Faith and the moral values of the gospels. We aim to nurture the children that they may grow into caring, confident, self-motivated adults.

The children will be made aware through our teachings in school that bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour and will not be tolerated. In this way we serve them and, through them, the wider community. As a Catholic school, we work to ensure that the whole school curriculum offers role models and opportunities for children to learn how to interact with others, to share their experiences, respect each other's differences and grow into caring, confident, self-motivated adults, treating all those they meet with dignity and in a fair and just manner.

Our Catholic school community knows that inclusion and equality leads to improved outcomes for all learners.

Our Shared Vision and Values

Our vision for St Nicholas' Primary is to inspire a community of faith and learning where there is mutual respect, enabling all members of the community to be happy and have the opportunity to reach their full god- given potential.

Our values are deeply held attitudes and commitments which form the foundation out of how our community chooses to live. At St Nicholas' Primary we have three core values:

- To be respectful and to be respected
- To achieve our God given potential
- To be happy

Our Aims

Our school aims are founded on the shared vision and values of our whole school community. They take account of the needs of the children and reflect the improvement objectives of East Dunbartonshire Council. They give a framework from which priorities in the school improvement plan will be developed.

All members of our school community are valued equally as individuals and excel in different ways, regardless of sex, colour or creed and therefore we aim to:

- Provide a happy, nurturing and welcoming environment where everyone is treated with respect.
- Provide a rich and varied curricular experience which develops and enhances each child's potential for learning, enabling them to become creative and independent individuals, nurturing their physical, emotional, academic, spiritual and social development;
- Encourage excellence, so all children strive to attain the highest possible levels of achievement in a challenging and motivating environment;
- Employ a range of teaching strategies which take cognisance of different learning styles, talents and skills, suited to the individual needs of all children;
- Through genuine partnership, develop and promote leadership skills in staff, pupils, and the whole school community in order to provide the highest quality education.

This policy should be read in conjunction with school's and East Dunbartonshire's Anti-bullying, Child Protection and GIRFEC policies. It applies equally, where applicable, to adults and children in the school.

Legal framework

1. St Nicholas' Primary School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the nine characteristics protected in law:
 1. Age
 2. Sex
 3. Race
 4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships
 5. Pregnancy and Maternity
 6. Gender reassignment
 7. Disability
 8. Sexual Orientation
 9. Religion or belief.

In addition, we include economic disadvantage within this policy, recognising that this has one of the most significant impacts for achieving equality for all our children and young people.

2. We welcome and actively engage with the statutory requirements and codes of practice. Our staff, learners, parents and partners know what is expected in these areas and are involved in fulfilling statutory duties to improve outcomes for children and young people.

3. 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.

Guiding principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:
(see appendix 1)

- Principle 1: All people are made in the image and likeness of God, and are deserving of dignity and respect***
- Principle 2: All learners are of equal value.***
- Principle 3: We recognise and respect difference.***
- Principle 4: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.***
- Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist***
- Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely***
- Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit from our school policies***
- Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence***
- Principle 9: Objectives***

The curriculum

5. All teaching and learning within a Catholic school is rooted in the teaching of the Church. As part of our work to promote equality, we aim to ensure that within our educational provision children are offered opportunities to develop their understanding of faith in practice and to:
 - understand and celebrate diversity in all its forms;
 - learn about equality and inclusion in a variety of curriculum areas (e.g. Health, Science, RE, Art and English);
 - develop an understanding of global citizenship;
 - understand the power of language particularly relating to verbal abuse due to race, disability, sexual orientation or social standing;
 - develop an understanding of their rights, the rights of others, and their responsibilities to each other;
 - develop an understanding and appreciation of other religious beliefs and cultures;
 - recognise and challenge prejudice and discriminatory attitudes and behaviour;
 - develop emotionally and intellectually with the personal qualities and attributes required to make a successful life in a diverse society.

Ethos and organisation

6. We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
 - pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
 - pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being

- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

7. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice, discrimination and intolerance which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

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

8. We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

9. The **Local Authority** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

10. The director of education or nominated Education Officer of the **Local Authority** has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

11. 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.

12. The **senior leadership team is responsible for:**

- coordinating equality work within staff teams
- dealing with reported incidents of racism or harassment and reporting these in detail to the Headteacher
- monitoring the progress of minority group children, including those on free school meals and from less economically affluent families
- allocating resources fairly and equitably, including recognising that some children may require more than others for an equal and fair chance to enjoy and achieve

14. **All staff** are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur

- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

15. **Visitors and Contractors** are expected to be aware of, and comply with, the school's equality policy.

Information and resources

16. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff members and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

17. All staff members have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Staff development and training

18. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

20. We will consider every breach of the policy in the light of the particular circumstances and, if pupils are involved, take into account their age and the nature of the breach. We will call on support from the Local Authority, the Police or other agencies as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

21. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

22. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to free school meals, disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

23. The head teacher, in collaboration with the local authority will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the school's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work.

24. All policies, functions and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in promoting equality.

25. As further equality requirements come into force policies, functions and strategies will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of new legislation.

26. Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and other key partners. Members of the school community will be kept informed of Equality and Diversity initiatives being undertaken.

29. The policy will be reviewed every three years as routine, more often should legislation or circumstances require it.

APPENDIX 1

Principle 1 – Overarching principle that guides and forms the other 8

All people are made in the image and likeness of God, and are deserving of dignity and respect

Principle 2: All learners are of equal value.

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

We therefore act to ensure that each and every member of the school community:

- *experiences equality of opportunity*
- *feels a full and respected member of the school community*
- *has high expectations of themselves, their peers, staff, and others with regard to fair treatment*

Principle 3: We recognise and respect difference.

Within our school community we know that treating all people equally does not necessarily mean treating them all the same.

Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences and the kinds of barrier, and disadvantage which people may face.

Principle 4: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- *positive attitudes towards all 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 creating a culture free from prejudice, discrimination and harassment.*

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 challenging, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist.

Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely

We endeavour to engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our 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 our whole school community.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published.

The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

