

Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic High School



Equality Policy

Date of Policy	Oct 2026
Date of Review	Oct 2027

Mission Statement

In Christ We Grow

Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving.

'I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit' [John 15: 5]

1. Introduction

As a Catholic community, Our Lady Queen of Peace High School is committed to equality of opportunity and inclusion. In line with our Mission Statement, 'In Christ we grow' we aim to treat each other with the same dignity and respect, inspired by the Gospel. We are committed to developing policies and practice that raise attainment for all students and close the gap between those facing disadvantage and their peers.

2. The Public Sector Duty

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school's duties with regard to equality are:

- To eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- To advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- To foster good relationships across all protected characteristics

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise any staff member, pupil, prospective pupil, or other member of the school community because of their:

- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

We aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with special emphasis on promoting equality and diversity, and eradicating prejudicial incidents for pupils and staff. Our school is committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation for diversity.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the school's Catholic Ethos
- Ensuring that all governors are aware of their responsibilities under equality legislation
- Having due regard to the school's general equality duty when making decisions
- Ensuring that this policy is implemented by the Headteacher
- Ensuring that all the school policies promote equality and maintaining aspects of the school's commitment to equality under review, for example in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment
- Ensuring that the school's equality objectives are published, actively pursued and reviewed at intervals of no more than four years
- Ensuring that equality information is published on an annual basis
- Monitoring the achievement of equality objectives
- Promoting British Values

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- Promoting the school's Catholic Ethos
- Making sure this policy and any related policies and procedures are implemented in school
- Ensuring the school's equality objectives are published and actively pursued
- Monitoring how and whether the school's equality objectives are being met
- Producing information for pupils, staff and governors about the school's equality objectives and how they are working
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are made in relation to disability, with regard to pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors to the school
- Ensuring that the school follows its Disability Accessibility Plan
- Making sure that this policy (and any other policies through which the school addresses equality matters) are published and are readily available to governors, staff, pupils, parents, carers and the wider school community
- Making sure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Act and receive appropriate training and any support in carrying these out
- Ensuring that appropriate action (including disciplinary action) is taken in cases of discrimination, harassment and victimisation including cases involving bullying and harassment related to any of the protected characteristics
- Ensuring that members of staff and pupils are aware of the procedure for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents
- Promoting British values.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Promoting the school's Catholic Ethos
- Being aware of their responsibilities under the Act and this policy and recognising that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- Keeping up to date with equality legislation relevant to their work
- Highlighting any training or development they require to carry out their responsibilities under the Act or this policy and attending any related training or learning opportunities
- Promoting equality of opportunity and good relations and not discriminating on any grounds
- Fostering good relations between groups with protected characteristics and those without protected characteristics
- Dealing fairly and professionally with any bullying and discriminatory incidents
- Being able to recognise and challenge prejudice, bias, discrimination, stereotyping and any inappropriate language or behaviour
- Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their lessons and being role models for equal opportunities through their words and actions

Pupils must be encouraged to recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so they understand and are able to:

- Promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- Tackle bias and stereotyping
- Work to promote anti bullying strategies
- Respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these
- Regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance

4. Key Principles

I. All members of the school community are of equal value and should be treated with dignity and respect.

- Every member of the school community is of equal value whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- All individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and should treat others in the same way.

II. The school recognises, respects and values difference and diversity

- Treating people equally does not necessarily mean treating them all in the same way. The school will take account of differences and the kind of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to protected characteristics.

- The school will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices in relation to disability including the provision of any necessary aids and services.
- The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances should be appreciated and valued.
- Diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the school.

III. The school will actively promote British values.

- The school will ensure that equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity is promoted and that pupils respect others and are well prepared to contribute to wider society and life in modern Britain.
- The fundamental British values are democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

IV. The school fosters positive attitudes and relationships.

- The school intends that its policies, procedures and activities should actively promote positive attitudes, good relations and mutual respect between all groups of individuals who are different from each other.
- The school will take action to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language including language that is derogatory about disabled people and homophobic and racist language.

V. The school observes good equalities practice for all members of staff.

- The school will ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion and continuing professional development.
- The school's policies and procedures for employees and potential employees will take into account equality considerations including any relevant exemptions or exclusions.

VI. The school will consult in relation to equality issues.

- When tackling equality issues, the school will consult and engage with those affected by its decisions and where possible, with those people who have special knowledge who can inform the school's approach.
- The school will take into account the views of those affected in the implementation and the review of this policy and in particular in relation to the school's equality objectives.

VII. The school will address bullying and prejudice motivated incidents.

- The school takes bullying and prejudice motivated incidents seriously and any such conduct and behaviour will be carefully monitored and dealt with fairly and firmly.
- The school will take into account the specific guidance issued by the DfE on bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying and bullying related to sexual orientation, transgender, disability, race and religion.

- Training will be given to members of staff to ensure they are aware of how to identify and to deal with such incidents. Further guidance is detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy.

VIII. The school fosters a shared sense of cohesion and belonging and intends that its policies and procedures should benefit society as a whole.

- The school will strive to ensure that all pupils, members of staff and school governors feel a sense of belonging within the school and within the wider school community and that they feel respected and are able to participate fully in school and in public life.
- The school intends that its policies and procedures should benefit society as a whole both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and by promoting greater participation in public life of all individuals from all groups including those with protected characteristics.

5. Aims to eradicate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act

We believe that a greater level of success from pupils and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Creating an inclusive environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the school. This environment will be achieved by:

- Adhering to our community principles, in particular, principle 2: 'We try to sort out our problems by talking calmly and respecting each other and our diversity'
- Being respectful
- Always treating all members of the school community fairly
- Developing an understanding of diversity and inclusion and the benefits it can have
- Adopting an inclusive attitude and ensuring that the whole school community understands what inclusive behaviour looks like in the school and how this aligns with the school's values.
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness
- Challenging bias and calling it out in order to move the conversation forward.
- Making reasonable adjustments to the school environment to make activities as accessible and as welcoming as possible
- Ensuring, where reasonably possible, that all pupils are able to take part in all the activities in school including extra-curricular activities and any residential visits.
- Monitoring the uptake of activities to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Ensuring that policies, procedures and decisions do not inadvertently, disadvantage groups of pupils with protected characteristics
- Dealing with bullying and prejudice related incidents effectively

- Ensuring that all appointment panels give due regard to equality issues so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to recruitment, promotion or training opportunities
- Providing training to staff & governors about their responsibilities under the Act and about equality issues
- Monitoring the school's Equality Policy and equality issues in school

We are committed to having a balanced, diverse and fair curriculum. We believe that our pupils should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding, to help ensure that pupils learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination and promotes inclusive attitudes whilst also making explicit to students Catholic teaching on these topics.

Incidents of prejudicial behaviour or hate speech among students will be dealt with swiftly. Details will be logged using our CPOMs system and categorised according to protected characteristic. This enables senior staff and governors to monitor data and informs how staff plan to support all students.

6. Aims to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

- The school has procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have additional needs or a disability through admissions meetings
- The school collects data and monitors the progress and achievement of groups of learners by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics. This information will help the school ensure that pupils are achieving their potential, the school is being inclusive in practice and that trends are identified which will help to inform the setting of the school's equality objectives;
- The school will publish attainment data which shows how pupils with different characteristics are performing in helping to identify whether there are any areas of inequality which need to be addressed
- The school will take action to close any gaps in progress or achievement for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills;
- The school will collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- The school will collect and analyse information about staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotion to ensure that all staff have equality of opportunity
- The school will ensure that it engages and consults with those people who are affected by a policy or activity in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones
- The school will encourage pupils with particular characteristics to participate fully in school activities for example by encouraging both boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic /socio-economic backgrounds to be involved in the full range of school clubs and societies;
- The school has a disabled parking bay and a disabled toilet

- The school is fully aware of the dietary requirements of ethnic groups within school and makes for all of our pupils taking into account equality issues
- The school will use a range of teaching strategies that ensures it meets the needs of all children;
- The school will provide support to children at risk of underachieving
- The school will take positive action which is proportionate to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of children and staff members with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support.

7. Aims to foster good relationships across all protected characteristics

The school will prepare children for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children

- The school teaches about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination in Curriculum for Life and across the curriculum
- The school will use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping
- The school promotes a whole-school ethos and values which challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour
- The school provides opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- The school includes the contribution of different cultures to world history that promote positive images of people
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
- The school promotes positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, school assemblies, visitors and whole school events
- The school will review relevant feedback from parents', pupils' and questionnaires and from parents' evening and from issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support

8. Dealing with prejudice and celebrating diversity

We do not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all members of our school with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported, our school is devoted to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

Our pupils are taught to be:

- Understanding of others
- Celebratory of diversity
- Eager to reach their full potential

- Inclusive
- Aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour and the laws protecting particular groups of people

The focus of our follow up to any prejudice-related incident would be to ensure that young people understood the legal and moral implications of their actions through education. Initial actions would be suspension from school, either externally or internally, followed by discussion with parents and the facilitation of restorative conversations between the young people involved. We would refer students to the relevant parts of our Curriculum for Life programme and ascertain if additional work was required with school staff or relevant outside agencies, such as the police early action team. Further discriminatory behaviour would lead to further sanctions.

9. Promotion of equality by the workforce

The school's employees will not:

- Discriminate against any member of the school community
- Treat other members of the school community unfairly

The school's employees will:

- Promote diversity and equality
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude
- Lead by example
- Seek training if they need to improve their knowledge in a particular area

Throughout the year, the school provides a variety of opportunities to celebrate diversity, including:

- Planning activities and assemblies for key diversity awareness days such as Black History Month or Pride month
- Inviting guest speakers to talk to pupils about diversity
- Incorporating lessons about diversity into the curriculum as part of our Curriculum for Life programme and across the curriculum
- Ensuring that the books that we read together as form groups celebrate diversity

10. Equality in the Workplace

We do not discriminate against staff with regard to their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partner status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation

- Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of the school community.
- All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the school's various policies relating to equality.
- All members of school staff who are involved in recruitment will receive appropriate training on equality issues.
- Decisions concerning staff recruitment will be based on merit apart from in necessary or exceptional circumstances and where exceptions under the Act apply.
- In accordance with provisions in the Act, the school will not enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until after a job offer has been made (unless the questions are related to an intrinsic function of the work for the job). Any necessary health questions will be asked after a job offer has been made and, in all cases, any health-related questions will be targeted, necessary and relevant to the job applied for.
- The school is committed to ensuring that all members of staff and the school's Governing Body undergo training and development in relation to their duties under the Act and in relation to this policy.
- We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

Monitoring and Review

- The school will review this policy annually and will ensure that the views of any other interested parties are sought in relation to the ongoing development and review of this policy.
- The school will evaluate the success of the school's equality work using quantitative and qualitative data and by the extent to which the school achieves improved outcomes for different groups.
- An analysis of equality data will inform discussions about the school's equality objectives and the school will regularly monitor whether and how the school is meeting its objectives.
- The school will monitor and will regularly review all policies, procedures and practices to ensure compliance with the Act and will assess whether any changes need to be made

Closing statement

Central to our mission statement, our core ethos and our purpose are to work together in mutual respect and understanding, thus achieving our aims of being fully inclusive and accessible to all and ultimately in providing the best possible learning experience for all of our children and young people.