



St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust

EQUALITIES POLICY

Presented & Approved by Trust Board	7th January 2022
Signed by Chair of Trust Board	<i>A Connor</i>
Name of Chair of Trust Board	Ann Connor
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Equality Scheme

The Trust aims:

- To develop the whole child ensuring gospel values drive their aspiration to serve their communities throughout their lives.
- To ensure the long term sustainability and continuity of Catholic education in the local community.
- To provide excellent high quality education and experiences for all those who desire a Catholic education, within the context of our changing society.
- To foster a sense of collaborative learning and sharing for all across Trust schools valuing the contributions of staff, governors and parents.

Ethos, Vision & Values

Schools within St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust are places where mercy is freely given;

where everyone is welcome, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel.

Therefore, inclusiveness is at the heart of our Equality Policy.

St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, students and any others involved in the school community, regardless of race, religion, gender, opportunity, sexuality, gender identity, beliefs or with any form of disability.

The definition of disability is subject to current government legislation.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Trust's schools to publish information about Equalities. The Equality Act 2010 clearly defines seven groups of people who are considered under the legislation to have direct protection from the framework of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The Trust's schools strong and historic Christian Ethos, Gospel Values and community involvement lead them to be committed to creating and sustaining an environment of mutual tolerance, respect, dignity and good relations.

Gospel values commit the Trust's schools to protect vulnerable groups and guard against discrimination, harassment and victimisation in any form.

This viewpoint mirrors directly the three General Duties of the PSED.

The General and Specific Duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality Act 2010

General Duties

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- 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.

Specific Duties Information to be published

- Please refer to individual schools Equalities policy & report

How the Trust will meet the General Duty & Specific Duty

The production of an Equality Scheme provides the Trust with a framework for integrating equality into all aspects of life in Trust Schools and demonstrates how it is seeking to meet the specific duty.

The Trust will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and stakeholders
- Eliminate harassment and discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Promote positive attitudes towards all. This means not representing people in a demeaning way; not pretending they do not exist; and not representing them anywhere at all
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life. It is also important to respect the wishes of disabled children in an educational setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in.
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Equality Objective – Action Plan

Schools have an Equalities Action Plan, to address the equalities objectives, which is based on the analysis in the Equalities report. All the information and analysis are from the school improvement plans, evaluations and student data relating to each Trust school's information.

Each school uses the information to improve education for all groups in the school.

Students who are underachieving or doing less well have additional provision to ensure improvement.

The vast majority of this information is already used by the schools to develop strategies to ensure that all students are doing well.

Some of the information may show that better could be done within a particular school or across the Trust.

The Trust will use information which tells it to plan better for the future and include these actions in its Equalities Objectives.

Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme

All staff including those with a disability will complete questionnaires pertaining to equality issues.

Areas which need to be developed will be addressed in the Access Plan.
Feedback from individual pupils and parents will also be taken into consideration.

Developing a voice for disabled students, staff and parents/carers

Students, parents, guardians and carers are fully involved in the review process for any student with SEN or a disability.

The schools will encourage staff, parents or carers to disclose any disability issues affecting them.

The Local Governing Body (LGB)

All parents are encouraged to stand for election to the Local Governing Bodies of Trust schools.

Removing Barriers

This refers to physical, curriculum and communications issues.
The Trust plans to reduce barriers in these areas are highlighted in each School's Accessibility Plan.

Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning

The Trust schools will ensure that people with disabilities are portrayed in a positive way.

Disability and harassment are also issues covered in RE and PSHCE lessons and relevant links made where appropriate in all areas of the curriculum.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole academy population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Trust schools will make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum and teaching methods as appropriate.

When a member of staff has a disability known to the school, the Headteacher and other staff will work together to meet the needs of the individual and the school as a whole.

The Trust schools will liaise carefully with Occupational Health and Trades Unions.

School Facility Lettings

Please refer to the Schools' Lettings Policies.

Student Achievement

All students who are disabled, with or without SEND, will have their attainment monitored in accordance with the schools' assessment policies.

Learning Opportunities

The Trust schools will strive to ensure that all students with a disability are given full access to learning opportunities in the curriculum.

Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including Social Emotional Behaviour Difficulties)

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. The schools in the Trust are part of their LA's co-ordinated admission scheme. In line with legislation the Trust's admissions criteria give first priority to baptised Catholics. Exclusions will always be based on an Academy's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Admissions, transition and exclusion data are all closely monitored.
Records are collated and reported to LGBs on a termly basis as appropriate.

Social Relationships

The Trust schools will place a great deal of emphasis on the development of positive relationships between students who have a disability and those who do not.
In all subjects, when possible they will provide positive images of disability.

Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

The Trust schools at present employ a number of staff who under the DDA definitions have a disability. These staff have been employed on merit. Schools will continue to recruit staff based on merit and will apply reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are able to carry out their tasks to their full potential.

Impact Assessment

Impact assessment is the process we use to screen policies and changes in the school for negative or adverse effect/ impact on disabled students, staff, parent's guardians, carers and the wider school community.

Reviewing/Monitoring

The leadership team in each school will use the information to monitor progress. There will be annual reports on the measurable progress of the Action Plan to LGBs, trustees, the leadership group and the diocese as appropriate.

Publishing

The Equalities Policy is published on the Trust website. Equalities reports will be available to all the Trust school's websites.

Equalities Reports

Equalities information and analysis reports from schools in the Trust will be available on their websites.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Directors

- The CEO will be the designated Director for the Equality Plan.
- The Trust's Board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the Trust and its academies are fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The Trust's Board seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our academies on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The directors will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Academies' environment give access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The directors welcome all applications to join the academies, whatever a child's socioeconomic background, race, gender or disability.
- The Trust's Board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in one of our academies on account of their race, sex or disability.

The role of the Head teacher

- It is the Head teacher's role to implement the Academy's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the CEO in doing so.
- It is the Head teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of academy life.

- The Head teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the Academy's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the head teacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the Trust or any of its academies.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher/senior leader/head teacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the head teacher and racist incidents are reported to the Trust's Board and local authority on a termly basis.

Breaches of this policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you or anyone else have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure **[or through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy]** as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. Such conduct will not be tolerated. It may amount to gross misconduct and will be addressed under the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.