

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy 2026–27



At St. Bernadette's Catholic School, you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.

1. INTRODUCTION

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which every member of our community is treated with dignity and respect, is able to participate fully in school life and has the opportunity to flourish.

Our commitment to equality is rooted in our Catholic ethos and mission. We recognise the dignity and worth of every person and seek to ensure that difference is respected, barriers are identified and removed, and discrimination is challenged.

This policy applies to pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors and others who engage with the school. It should be read alongside the school's Accessibility Plan, SEND Policy and Information Report, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Admissions Policy and other relevant policies.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

The school will meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In carrying out its functions, the school will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

For pupils, the protected characteristics covered by the schools provisions of the Equality Act are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Age and marriage and civil partnership are protected characteristics in other contexts, including aspects of employment, but do not apply to pupils in the same way.

The school understands that the PSED is an ongoing duty. Equality considerations will therefore be considered before and during significant decisions, policy development and changes to practice, and will be kept under review.

3. AIMS

St. Bernadette's aims to:

- provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in which all members of the school community are valued;
- promote high expectations, self-esteem, belonging and positive relationships for all pupils;
- ensure equitable access to an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum and to the wider life of the school;
- identify and remove barriers to participation, learning, attendance and achievement;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and adults where required;

- challenge discrimination, prejudice, harassment, victimisation, stereotyping and discriminatory language;
- promote understanding and respect for difference and foster positive relationships across the school community;
- ensure that curriculum content, resources and the learning environment reflect diversity appropriately and avoid stereotyping; and
- use evidence and monitoring to identify inequalities and take appropriate action.
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4. EQUALITY IN PRACTICE

Curriculum and teaching

Equality and inclusion are embedded across the curriculum. All pupils are entitled to access ambitious learning. Teachers identify potential barriers and use high-quality teaching, appropriate scaffolding, accessible resources and reasonable adjustments so that pupils can participate meaningfully without lowering expectations.

The school values linguistic and cultural diversity. Staff use respectful and accurate language, support pupils to develop understanding of different experiences and perspectives, and ensure that resources and examples do not reinforce harmful stereotypes.

SEND and disability

The school will not place disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage and will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The school also fulfils its duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice. Provision identified in Education, Health and Care Plans and SEN Support plans will be implemented and reviewed appropriately. The Accessibility Plan sets out how the school works to improve access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information.

Behaviour, bullying and prejudice-related incidents

Discriminatory language, bullying, harassment, victimisation and prejudice-related behaviour are not accepted. Incidents will be challenged, recorded and responded to in line with relevant school policies. When applying behaviour procedures, the school will consider individual needs, disability and any reasonable adjustments required.

Admissions and participation

Admissions arrangements and access to school activities will be implemented fairly and in accordance with relevant legislation. The school will consider barriers that may prevent particular pupils or groups from participating in trips, clubs, enrichment, leadership opportunities and other aspects of school life, and will take proportionate action to address them.

Parents, carers and the wider community

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We will seek to make communication accessible, listen to different perspectives and provide reasonable adjustments where required. Equality information and relevant policies will be made available through the school website and on request.

Staff and recruitment

The school is committed to fair and non-discriminatory employment practices. Recruitment, professional development, deployment and opportunities for responsibility will be managed in accordance with equality legislation and relevant employment policies.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school meets its statutory equality duties;
- have oversight of the school's published equality information and objectives; and
- monitor progress and provide appropriate challenge to leaders.

The Headteacher and senior leaders will:

- ensure this policy is implemented consistently;
- ensure equality implications are considered in significant decisions, policies and practices;
- ensure incidents of discrimination and prejudice are addressed appropriately; and

- ensure staff understand their responsibilities.

The Inclusion Lead and other relevant leaders will support the school in identifying barriers, analysing evidence, reviewing provision and contributing to the monitoring of equality objectives.

Subject and curriculum leaders will consider equality, representation, access and participation within their areas of responsibility.

All staff are responsible for promoting an inclusive culture, challenging discrimination and prejudice, making appropriate adjustments and following school policies and agreed provision.

6. MONITORING EQUALITY

The school will use relevant and proportionate evidence to identify patterns, inequalities or barriers affecting pupils or groups. This may include:

- attainment and progress;
- attendance and persistent absence;
- behaviour, suspensions and exclusions;
- participation in enrichment, clubs, trips and wider school opportunities;
- SEND provision, accessibility and reasonable adjustments;
- pupil, parent/carer and staff voice;
- reports of bullying, discriminatory or prejudice-related incidents;
- curriculum, resources and representation; and
- other information relevant to the school's context.

Where monitoring identifies a disparity or barrier, leaders will consider the reasons for it and take proportionate action. The school will avoid drawing conclusions about individuals solely because they belong to a particular group.

7. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

The school will publish relevant and proportionate information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and will publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives. Equality objectives will be reviewed at least every four years, with progress considered regularly.

The school's current equality objectives and supporting information may be published alongside this policy or as a separate document on the school website. Objectives will be informed by evidence about the school community and will focus on areas where action can make a meaningful difference.

8. COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Any pupil, parent/carer, member of staff or other member of the school community who believes that discrimination, harassment, victimisation or another breach of this policy has occurred should raise the matter with an appropriate member of staff or the Headteacher. Concerns will be considered in accordance with the relevant school procedure, including the Complaints Policy where appropriate.

9. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated when legislation, statutory guidance or the needs of the school require it.

Policy updated: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

APPENDIX I – EQUALITY IN EVERYDAY SCHOOL PRACTICE

In practice, the school will:

- plan learning and wider opportunities so that pupils can participate and succeed;
- anticipate barriers and make appropriate adjustments rather than waiting for difficulties to arise;

- use accessible teaching approaches, scaffolds, visuals and resources where these support participation and understanding;
- provide opportunities for pupil voice and ensure that a range of pupils are heard;
- select curriculum content, texts, images and role models thoughtfully so that pupils encounter a broad range of people, cultures and experiences without tokenism or stereotyping;
- teach pupils to disagree respectfully, challenge prejudice and understand the impact of discriminatory language and behaviour;
- review participation and outcomes for groups of pupils and respond where inequalities are identified;
- work with families and relevant agencies to understand and reduce barriers; and
- ensure equality is considered through everyday curriculum, pastoral and leadership practice rather than only through one-off events or celebrations.