



THE WILLOWS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Equalities Policy

11th September 2023

Signed by:

Mrs S.A. Barnett

Headteacher

Date: 19/09/2023

Mrs. C. Johnson

Chair of Governors

Date: 19/09/2023

Statement of Principles

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors at The Willows Catholic Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At The Willows Catholic Primary school, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Mission Statement

Catholic schools are special, Christ's teachings and values, through the Gospel, permeates through absolutely everything we do. Whether this is the way in which we interact with each other, forgiving those who have upset or hurt us and how we treat anyone within our family or community.

Our central aim at The Willows is our school motto:
God Loves Me, God Loves Everyone.

With Christ at our heart, we are a loving, caring family where each individual is nurtured in mind and spirit to fully become the person God created.

In learning together, we support each other to reach our full potential in a safe and stimulating environment where all are valued and respected.

Our school motto: 'God loves me, God loves everyone' guides our journey.

School In Context

At The Willows we continuously strive to live our school mission statement through all actions, thoughts and words. We place Christ firmly at the foundation of the entire learning process. Underpinning this is the recognition that each person is unique and should be valued and respected. This was highlighted during our last inspection as a key strength during interviews with both pupils and parents.

Since the June 2015, the context of the school has changed significantly. The school has grown from 149 pupils on roll to 209. The rise in pupil numbers has created some pressure on classroom organisation. The school has gone from mixed age group classes to single age group classes. Numbers increased rapidly with 2019/20 figures indicating that 14.9% of the school joined late. Children continue to join the school from a variety of socio-economic circumstances and the vast

majority of children are from white British backgrounds (88.2%) with 11 children having English as an additional language. The school's IDACI is 0.12 (Most children – 64.4% -come from highest social class households (Bands A*-B); this is a decrease since 2015 and the school is seeing a gradual increase in children coming from lower band social class households (16.4%). The number of pupils eligible for FSM6 in 2021/2022 is 15.6%, lower than national average. The proportion of children registered with special educational needs remains around 11.8% (in line with national average). The majority of pupils are from Christian backgrounds (83%), 59% being Catholic. On leaving The Willows the majority of pupils transfer to St. Bede's Catholic High School in Lytham (83% 2021).

Pupils make excellent progress demonstrated by internal tracking systems. End of Key Stage data reaffirms this judgement. When groups are analysed progress is consistent. Children are all recognised as individuals and therefore progress is always measured for each pupil; support and challenge is integral to the personal journey of each pupil.

The Governing Body is made up of a variety of parents and professionals who bring with them a wide range of experience in service provision, employment and issues relating to the needs of those who come under the nine categories of the protected characteristics.

These include work within:

- Civil Service
- Business
- Religious
- Community
- Education

Over the past ten years the school environment has changed and throughout these changes accessibility to the whole environment for all has been a key priority. Today all areas of school are accessible and most entrances to classrooms are also DDA compliant.

Ethos and Atmosphere

At The Willows Catholic Primary school trust, openness and respect form the basis of all relationships across the school community. Leadership is developed within all groups and is based upon love and the uniqueness of each member. This ensures a mutual respect between all members of the school community. Leaders seek to empower each individual to believe anything is possible.

There is an openness of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school and provides a safe and secure environment in which everyone can grow.

All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions.

All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect. The displays around the school are of a high quality and are beginning to reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.

We firmly believe that all individuals have the right to 'be themselves' and therefore the dignity of each individual is respected and children, parents, staff and Governors are encouraged to celebrate differences as unique gifts from God.

Policy Development

This policy applies to the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of the outcomes of a transparent process in line with LA guidelines and will be developed through consultation with

pupils, parents, staff, governors, the parish and the wider community. Latest guidance will be available on request.

Monitoring and Review

The Willows is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their potential.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary.

Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Attendance
- Exclusions and truancy
- Racism, disability, sexism, homophobia, and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in Extended Learning Opportunities

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

The Willows Catholic Primary School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

We collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff and governors:

- Staff profile
- Attendance on courses
- Targets met through Performance Management and impact on professional development
- Staff turnover and development of leadership roles
- Governing body profile

(At The Willows we recognise the requirements of the GDPR will apply, but at the same time that normal conventions and rules relating to confidentiality will need to be observed. It follows that not all the relevant information that a school gathers have to be placed in the public domain.)

We have identified the following issues from the analysis of the data:

- Further links need to be established to deepen children's awareness of equality and diversity issues.
- Children to continue to be given various opportunities to be part of the decision-making

process.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy and action plan is carried out by the SLT with the assistance of the SEC committee of the Governing Body.

Their role is to:

- Lead discussions, organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions
- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

Developing Best Practice

Learning and Teaching

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

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils
- Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- The school will place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability.
- We will meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- The school will provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and

external, including displays and signage

Curriculum

At The Willows, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within The Willows is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community

Language

We recognise that it is important at The Willows that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of The Willows to provide equal access to all activities from an early age.

We undertake responsibility for making contributions to extended learning opportunities and are aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coach drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy.

We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

At The Willows we make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners
- Use first language effectively for learning

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular

groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils

- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations)
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- This must include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible
- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds

Staff Recruitment

When employing staff, criteria is also related to our Mission Statement, which places Christ at the centre of our learning process. Therefore, we will always seek individuals who will embrace our ethos and religious denomination.

- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

Note:

Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. An aided school may be able to rely on this for some roles in school, particularly those roles that provide spiritual leadership. However this would not apply for all staff in School.

In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational requirement on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be permissible, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved. Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

We will work with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities
- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities

Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that

staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body

- The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this policy
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality

Commissioning and Procurement

The Willows Catholic Primary School will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

The Measurement of Impact of the Policy

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

Publicising the Policy and Plan

Over the past year we have become an Eco school and as such have reduced the amount of paper correspondence. Therefore, as with other policies this policy will be publicised on our school website and will be available to parents/carers on request.

Annual Review of Progress

Progress and performance in respect of this policy covering ethnicity, disability and gender will be reported annually to meet the requirements of current legislation. This will then form the basis of the annual school action plan.

Equality Impact Analysis

Undertaking equality impact analysis (EIAs) is similar to undertaking health and safety risk assessments. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, function or strategy will be on a wide range of people.

EIAs are a way in which we can analyse all our work (this could be a policy, procedure, project, strategy or service) to ensure it meets the needs of all our service users and that no group (in relation to ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation) is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.

Appendix 1 – For Information

Race:

The term race includes colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and citizenship as well as race.

Reporting racist incidents in schools

Schools in Lancashire are required to have in place a procedure for dealing with and reporting racist incidents, which includes providing an annual summary of racist incidents to Lancashire County Council.

Disability:

What is a disability?

Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:

- substantial (more than minor or trivial)
- adverse
- long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).
- There is no need for a person to have a specific, medically-diagnosed cause for their impairment – what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause.
- Examples include hearing or sight impairments, a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties. There are many other types of condition, illness or injury that can result in a person being *disabled* (e.g. diabetes, asthma, cancer, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions, facial disfigurement).

Gender:

The term gender includes boys, girls, men and women, and transgender/transsexual people. Sexual orientation is a distinct protected characteristic. (The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender).

What is the difference between sex and gender?

- Sex refers to biological status as male or female. It includes physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia.
- Gender is a term that is often used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. While aspects of biological sex are the same across different cultures, aspects of gender may not be.

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexism is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or are perceived to be so. It assumes that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as **homophobia**, although **lesophobia** and **biphobia** are also coming into use.

Whether through institutional practice or personal behaviour, the prevalence of heterosexism is likely to mean that LGB people feel excluded and unsafe. This effect can be mitigated by an actively welcoming and supportive environment.

Sexual orientation is defined as an individual's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as her or him (gay or lesbian), people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or people of both sexes (bisexual).

Transgenderism and gender re-assignment

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. Gender re-assignment is the process a transgender person goes through to change sex.