

Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School



Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Mission Statement

At Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School, we pride ourselves on being a culturally diverse family. We seek to instill, in every child that we nurture, the joy and wonder of learning.

As we journey together with Christ, we develop children's resilience, intellectual curiosity and creativity through our positive learning behaviours. We nurture and cherish the unique talents of all, empowering them to flourish and grow into life-long learners.

Our mission is to show love, promote learning and belief in God our Father.

LOVE – LEARN- BELIEVE

Statement of intent

Under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School values are underpinned by our statutory duties. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities.

We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender identity and/or reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics), amended in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embed equality within teaching and resources
- Use key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our school
- Promote community cohesion
- Promote parental engagement
- Invest in regular staff training
- Use key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including members of the SLT, teachers, TAs, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, volunteers, agency staff (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy) and all pupils.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

2. Principles and Aims

We see all staff, all learners and potential learners, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

The school will:

- Promote **race equality** and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.
- Promote **disability equality**, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- Promote **gender equality** by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity amongst individuals of all genders.

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. The school will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. The school's Admissions Policy will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

The school will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the governing board.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy, procedure or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of any protected characteristic.
- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment,

and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish the Equality Policy.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
 - Admissions.
 - The way the school provides and education for pupils.
 - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
 - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the headteacher.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, CPD programmes and in membership of the governing body.

The headteacher will:

- Implement the policy and procedures.
- Set an appropriate standard of behaviour and lead by example.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- Ensure staff are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

Staff will:

- Address incidents of harassment or bullying in school which may have arisen due to underlying issues of equality.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, and pertaining to their specific roles.

- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.
- Act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether relating to themselves or to others, to a member of the school staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

4. Forms of Discrimination

- Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
- Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

5. Protected characteristics

Staff will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.

- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated.

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

6. Sex

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a pupil's biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. We will ensure that pupils and staff members of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils or staff of other sexes.

The school will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.

Boys and girls, and members of staff, will be offered an equal opportunity to undertake any activity in the school.

7. Race and ethnicity

We will ensure that pupils and staff of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils and the school will regularly review its practices to ensure that they are fair.

The school will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity.

We will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' will not be tolerated, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

We may, however, take positive action to address the particular challenges affecting pupils, and/or members of staff, of one racial or ethnic group, in consultation with them, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

8. Disability

We will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.

We will ensure that they do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at

break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

The school will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The school will meet its duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented and reviewed where necessary.

The school will adhere to its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

If staff are disabled, or become disabled, they are encouraged to tell the school about their condition so that they can be supported appropriately.

If a member of staff experiences difficulties at work because of a disability, they will meet with their line manager and/or Human Resources to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. A referral to Occupational Health may be made.

If the school considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, where possible, an alternative solution will be discussed.

9. Religion and belief

The school will ensure that pupils and staff members are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the school's Attendance and Absence Policy.

10. Sexual orientation

We will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bi-sexual pupils and members of staff, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

RSE lessons will be taught in accordance with our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

11. Gender Reassignment

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. This school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the social community.

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if that person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

All members of staff and pupils have a right to privacy, which includes the right to keep one's transgender status confidential. School staff should not disclose information that may reveal a child or other staff members' transgender status.

Staff have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity within the constraints of our dress code.

Pupils have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity outlined in our School Uniform Policy.

12. Maternity and Pregnancy

We will ensure that no member of staff is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, as a result of their pregnancy or maternity leave. The school will follow all HR guidelines in this matter.

13. Looked-after children (LAC)

LAC and previously LAC (PLAC) will be given the highest priority for admissions, as per the requirements of our Admissions Policy.

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all LAC and PLAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

We will ensure that any SEND that LAC or PLAC have are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

14. The curriculum

The school will ensure, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.

To ensure equality, diversity and acceptance are taught and promoted throughout each subject area, the curriculum content and resources used draw on interest and relevance to pupils of all groups.

15. Promoting inclusion

We will promote inclusion and equality at our school through:

- Ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our governing board and staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in pupils an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- Providing a variety of educational and residential visits that expose pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and the curriculum.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- Communicating our policy to parents to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- Discussing equality issues as an agenda item for the school council.

16. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

We will ensure that any pupil with a protected characteristic, who has a medical condition, is fully supported in line with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and First Aid Policy.

17. Pupils that have left school

The school's responsibility to not discriminate, harass or victimise will not end when a pupil has left school. It will continue to apply with regard to subsequent actions related to our previous relationship with the pupil, such as the provision of references.

18. The Public Sector Equality Duty

The school will meet its duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding pupils who have any of the protected characteristics.
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how the school may further equality.

There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and pupils will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

19. Bullying and discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

Our Anti-bullying Policy will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

Any incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in our Complaints Policy.

20. Staff Training

Staff training needs and associated development opportunities will be identified through regular staff appraisals, in line with the school's Appraisal Policy. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit.

Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training that will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for teachers to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that the school is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, Day of Remembrance and International Women's Day.

21. Uniform and Dress

The Act does not deal specifically with school uniform or other aspects of appearance, such as hair colour and style, and the wearing of jewellery and make-up, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of pupils applies here in relation to other aspects of the school policy.

The school will ensure that blanket uniform policies do not discriminate because of protected characteristics. It will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as school safety or discipline.

The school has a Staff Dress Code which will not be discriminatory in respect to age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

22. Staff Recruitment

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate. Short listing of applicants will be done by more than one person wherever possible.

Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which will only be used with the HR's approval. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy.

We are required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

23. Appeal Process

If staff believe that they may have been discriminated against they are encouraged to raise the matter through the school's Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.