



Holy Cross
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Equality Policy

Single Equalities Policy

Statement of Principles

Holy Cross and all its stakeholders are committed to this Single Equalities Policy. Holy Cross as a Catholic school recognises the diversity of each individual and ensures inclusion for all and in doing so, everyone can achieve their full potential.

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of Holy Cross 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. Our school recognises that each one of us is special with our own unique gifts and talents. Holy Cross strives to treat individuals within the teachings of the gospel values and ensures that others are treated with respect, dignity, honesty and equity.

At Holy Cross, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential including those with protected characteristics: -gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. At Holy Cross we also include disadvantaged pupils, EAL, CLA and other learning needs.

Evidence of this is through our mission statements which states, “We recognise and endeavour to serve the needs of all members of the school community academic, spiritual, moral, social and physical. We acknowledge the needs of those who are disadvantaged in any way”.

School in Context

The main characteristics of Holy Cross in relation to the characteristics of equality addressed below (*figures correct at September 2020*).

For example:

- There are currently 424 boys and 362 girls on the school roll.
- The ethnic make-up of the pupils registered at the school is largely White British (742 pupils) and then other white backgrounds, Pakistani, Chinese, Indian, white and Asian, white and Caribbean.
- The linguistic profile of the school is English except for low numbers of Polish.
- 15 pupils with a known disability are on the school roll.
- The school is aware of the low number of staff and Governors who have a disability and ensures their needs are met.
- The school is physically accessible on the ground floor with ramps and wider doors to make access easier for wheelchair users. There are disabled changing facilities in the PE area.
- We currently have 4 Children in Care.

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are a Catholic community where every person is valued. We recognise each pupil as made in the image of God, all with different gifts and qualities. Christ is at the heart of our school and we promote a community where all pupils can be safe, be themselves, be proud of who they are, be happy and make our community a better place. This policy reflects our mission to Love God, Work Hard and Be Kind.

Holy Cross prides itself on its strong ethos and warm inclusive welcome.

At Holy Cross, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community. There is an *openness* and warmth of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.

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 reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.

Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through daily collective worship or assemblies or planning of assemblies, free access to the chapel for mass/private prayer/meditation or chaplaincy team. Opportunities are available to all within our sacramental programmes within our parishes, feast days and Holy Days of Obligation activities and retreats or enrichment visits off-site.

Most of our pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities is well below average. Holy Cross has a small percentage of Polish children. The majority of pupils are Roman Catholic but children who practice other faiths or none are included in all activities.

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 and through consultation with pupils (on the school council), staff in CPD, parents' evenings and governors' meetings.

Monitoring and Review

Holy Cross is a fully 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 learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential. We recognise that each person is a unique individual living through Christ.

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

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 and initiate appropriate intervention strategies.

The types of performance data we collect and analyse are:

- CAT scores
- Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 results (tests and/or Teacher Assessment)
- Fischer Family Trust Estimates for Key Stage 3 and 4
- Internal assessment levels across Key Stage 3
- Estimated grades at Key Stage 4

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, disabilism, 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.

Holy Cross 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 and ensure that we treat all data and personal information with the utmost confidentiality.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Improvement Plan. The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and action plan is Mr Greg Lindley (Deputy Headteacher)

His 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 pupil's 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;
- All subject leaders' departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- 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 should 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 must 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 to be 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 Holy Cross, 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 Holy Cross 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 Holy Cross 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 this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age. All pupils are encouraged to engage in our comprehensive extra-curricular programme. Children are encouraged to join in enrichment activities. Staff are welcome to create extra-curricular clubs which help share their expertise or interests and enjoy the added benefit of community links to create further opportunities for pupils.

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

We undertake at Holy Cross to 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 (Polish pupils)
- 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 by our Learning Mentor, Chaplain or Heads of Year, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination.

- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support and acknowledge the need for external agency support when necessary.
- 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

- 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 fully with our parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school. They are invited to all events involving their child either for performance or progress purposes.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities especially with our Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, chaplaincy, SVP, STEM activities and work-based learning programmes.
- 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 Head teacher 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 Head teacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating 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

Holy Cross will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation in line with Lancashire County Council guidelines. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

In addition to meeting and supporting our policy, once on site, the school will check and/or provide the following to all contractors and service providers:

- Evaluate the competence/suitability of any contractor engaged
- Scrutinise the contractor's risk assessment and communicate any risks or controls to the contractor
- Induct contractors on arrival on site
- When required, inform staff and other premises users of any risks and controls associated with the contractors on site
- Monitor the contractor during the progress of the work
- Review the contractors work upon completion

Publicising the Policy and Plan

This Policy is available on our website and in the school, staff shared area.

From monitoring of the equality data 2015-16, Holy Cross Equality Objectives for 2016-17 are;

- To increase the levels of boy's progress and achievement in school and their engagement in school life.
- To improve the physical accessibility of the school site.

Annual Review of Progress

We are legally required to report annually on our progress and performance in respect of our policy covering ethnicity, disability and gender and to report annually on our progress to improve access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information. Taking this single equality approach, we will incorporate all requirements into one annual report which meets the requirements of the new legislation.

Updated: Autumn 2020

Review date: Autumn 2024