

Equal Opportunities Policy

The mission of St. Joseph's school is to encourage spiritual awareness, promote a full understanding of the catholic faith and foster the development of all the gifts and skills with which the children in our care are endowed.

Introduction

The second Vatican Council clearly reiterated what is now fundamental to Catholic belief and teaching - namely the basic equality between all human beings:

"All human beings are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God's image; they have the same nature and origin and, being redeemed by Christ, they enjoy the same divine calling and destiny.... forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design."

(Gaudium et Spes 29)

The sentiments expressed in the above statement should be evident in everything we undertake in St. Joseph's school.

This policy has been drawn up having regard to the legal obligation of the school and its board of Governors in respect of currently applicable equal opportunities legislation.

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the teaching staff and Governors of the school. It has the full agreement of the Governing Body and was agreed by the Governing Body on

THE NATURE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The nature of Equal Opportunities commits us to:

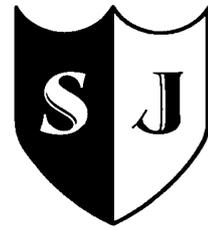
- Ensuring equality of opportunity to all members of the School Community regardless of racial / ethnic background, gender, socio-economic background, disability, Special Educational Needs or Religion
- Support the policy of inclusion within the life of the School
- Preventing discriminatory practices and promoting good relationships
- Reflecting positive images of all groups within the School Community
- Helping the children to develop an understanding and appreciation of our multi-cultural society
- Providing equality of access in all curriculum areas
- Ensuring that there is equality of opportunity and access for all in every area of school life

We firmly believe that each person at St. Joseph's School should be valued for his or her individuality. That it is the differences between people that make them special and unique. That we should value differences of gender, race, religion, physical and intellectual aptitudes and encompass all in a living Equal Opportunity Policy which follows the Gospel values of Love, Truth, Justice and Peace.



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

'Growing in Faith, Faith in Growing'



The Aims of the Equal Opportunities Policy

Our school embodies in its daily life, work and worship the loving traditions of Christian values and faith. We aim to promote equal opportunities to encourage children to respect each other and to work harmoniously together in order that they are prepared to participate positively in a multi-racial and culturally diverse society, now and in the future.

We aim to offer equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum so that all pupils may achieve their full academic potential.

We believe children's sense of identity and self-respect is a fundamental aspect of their development. They have a right to health, individuality, dignity, opportunities for learning and socialisation with adults.

All children must be free from discrimination such as racism or sexism and are actively encouraged to respect each other.

We believe all adults working in the school should value people's different racial origins, religions, cultures, languages and abilities so that each child and adult is respected as an individual.

We will aim to emphasise the richness of other cultures while also making children aware of the similarities, which transcend cultural differences.

We will value the contribution of the home and wider community to the implementation of Equal Opportunity strategies.

We will counter racism and sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices.

We will counter all forms of stereotyping by regularly examining teaching resources and discarding those which do not accord with this policy.

We will plan our lessons to include appropriate differentiation and provide resources and staffing to assist all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and those who are gifted and talented.

We will organise and equip the classroom environment to address a wide range of learning needs.

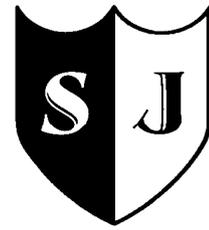
We will ensure that assessment and recording procedures are fair and free of cultural or gender bias. Provision is made for alternative activities or resources for recording to ensure that all children can demonstrate their true potential.

The school follows the LA / Governing Body Admission Policy, which does not permit gender, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

Children's names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Children should be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

The ethos of St Joseph's reflects these ideals and the curriculum promotes them.





Principles for the Teaching and Learning of Equal opportunities

As teachers we recognise the need for relevant and differentiated teaching where appropriate. We acknowledge the need to adopt flexible teaching approaches to ensure that children are empowered to overcome difficulties in learning. The school curriculum is rooted in the child's experiences, relating his / her cultural experiences to those on offer in the school.

The planned curriculum identifies areas where equal opportunities can be linked into our daily curriculum. The delivered curriculum endeavours to reflect and meet the needs of all the children. We seek to recognise and celebrate individual differences, including varied learning styles.

We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access and opportunity to all aspects of the school curriculum. We endeavour to take all necessary steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination from the procedures and practices linked to curriculum delivery. We aim to teach the children that discriminatory behaviour is not acceptable and to provide special access arrangements where necessary for children to have equal opportunity to reach their full potential.

Through Assembly, SEALS and daily worship we seek to show the pupils at the school that God made each one of us to be different but equal; that we should not make judgements of others based upon appearance and that all people everywhere should be treated with love and respect.

We seek to ensure, through our discipline and other pastoral policies that each child is valued for their individuality throughout the school day whether at work or recreation. We see the Social, Moral and Cultural aspects of the children's development as permeating all aspects of school life and we endeavour to ensure that all adults and children are aware that discriminatory behaviour goes directly against the Mission of our School.

Strategies for the Teaching of Equal opportunities

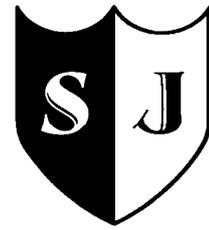
To ensure that all children are gaining equal access to the curriculum and achieving according to their ability we plan, record and assess children's' achievement in learning accurately – this is reflected in our planning, record-keeping and assessment policy, which ensures consistency throughout the school.

The school's resources and displays reflect and promote our equal opportunities work in the curriculum and around the school. Racist / sexist / classist literature is not used in the school and teachers and support staff ensure this is not introduced at any time. Stereotyping of any kind is totally unacceptable in our school. All school policies, which are in practice are bound by the aims of this policy.

The role of governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.





The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for admission to or for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

The governing body will, in its annual report, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The role of the Head Teacher

It is the Head Teacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy and he is supported by the governing body in so doing.

It is the Head Teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Head Teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, 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 in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

The Head Teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

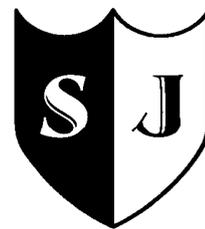
The role of the class teacher

The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.





The social, emotional as well as the intellectual well-being of the children is paramount.

All our teachers challenge any incidents of a sexist nature, prejudice or racism or incidents that might undermine the self-esteem of children with learning differences. We record any serious incidents, and draw 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 occurrence of discrimination.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The governing body does this by:

- monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against
- requiring the Head Teacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils
- monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated

Policy Revision

This policy was revised in January 2012 and was presented to Governors during Spring Term 2012.

