



St Joseph's RC Primary School Ramsbottom

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

2018-19

Equality at St Joseph's

All policies and procedures at St Joseph's Ramsbottom are underpinned by the Equality Act 2010. This school places equality of everyone in the community at the forefront of its ethos. God loves everyone equally, therefore we do the same.

Everything we do is based on the values of the Gospel. These values, which are also British Values, include love, faith, hope, equality, respect, responsibility, rights, dignity, trust, honesty, tolerance, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation, hospitality, mercy, community, service, simplicity, stewardship, justice and peace.

MISSION STATEMENT

“There are 3 things that last: Faith, Hope and Love. Love one another as I have loved you.”

Our school is proud to be part of the Roman Catholic community in the Parish of St Joseph's Ramsbottom. Our school has a distinctive character, because everything we do is based on the values of the Gospel. The purpose of our community is to recognise the worth and dignity of all and to fully develop the talents of each person.”

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of Parliament, as well as almost a hundred sets of regulations, dealing with equality and discrimination. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

The law should make it easier for school leaders and governors to understand their legal responsibilities and tackle inequalities in education.

In England and Wales, the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, as well as academies and free schools.

It covers all aspects of school life to do with how a school treats pupils and prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, and members of the community. Everything a school does must be fair, non-discriminatory and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage. In particular, a school must not discriminate, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:

- Admissions.

- The way it provides education for pupils.
- How it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- Excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

What actions and behaviours are unlawful?

The Act defines a number of types of unlawful behaviour, including:

- Direct discrimination.
- Indirect discrimination.
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or staff.
- Discrimination arising from disability.
- Harassment related to a protected characteristic.
- Victimisation of someone because they have made, or helped with, a complaint about discrimination.

Protected characteristics

The Act uses the term “protected characteristics” to refer to aspects of a person’s identity. Treating a person less favourably because they have one or more of these characteristics would be unlawful. The protected characteristics are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

The protected characteristics of age and marriage and civil partnership apply to schools as employers, but not in relation to their provision for pupils.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Since April 2011, schools have also been bound by a part of the Equality Act 2010 called the Public Sector Equality Duty (also known as the PSED, or simply the “Equality Duty”).

The Equality Duty replaces the previous three sets of duties on schools to promote disability, gender and race equality through having equality policies

and action plans for these groups. Some schools chose to meet these previous duties by combining the three policies into a “single” equality policy.

There is now no requirement for schools to have equality policies, schemes and/or action plans. This has been made clear in the updated list of statutory policies for schools from the Department for Education (DfE).

The new Equality Duty has two parts: the “general” duty and “specific” duties.

St Joseph’s School considers how our policies, practices and day-to-day activities impact on pupils and staff. We ensure we have “due regard” to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

There are two specific duties to assist St Joseph’s in meeting the general duty. We have complied with these two duties from April 6, 2012. They are:

- To publish information to show how they are complying with the Equality Duty. This is updated at least annually.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years. These can be found in our Accessibility Plan.

What is meant by ‘due regard’?

Having due regard means that St Joseph’s considers the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of decision-making, developing and reviewing policies and how they deliver services.

According to advice for school leaders and governors from the DfE: “The duty to have ‘due regard’ to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.”

Publishing equality information

As a minimum, schools should publish information on:

- The diversity of the school population.
- How they are performing in relation to the three aims of the Equality Duty.
- The diversity of their workforce, although this only applies to schools with more than 150 employees.

Measurable objectives

St Joseph’s sets equality objectives to tackle any issues of discrimination, inequality and disadvantage.

Objectives can be linked to challenges the school is already responding to in the school improvement plan, or can address issues and concerns identified through consultation with pupils, staff and parents.

How we measure the objectives

We have data on the above objectives, and we aim to improve between September and July of the academic year.

The role of school governing body.

Governing bodies are the “responsible body” for ensuring that the school meets the requirements of equality legislation. Essentially this means the governors of St Joseph’s:

- Ensure the school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that its employees do not carry out unlawful discriminatory actions or behaviour.
- Support and guide the school to have “due regard” for equality in all its functions.
- Ensure the school complies with the Equality Duty and meets the two “specific duties” for schools.