ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER

# Equality Statement and Scheme

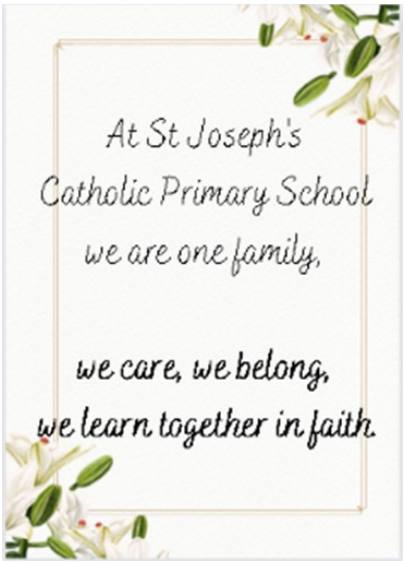
*Part 2 – Equality Policy*

*We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.*

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|---|---|
| **Approved by (Head Teacher)** | Annette Savage |
| **Approved by (Chair of Governors)** | Alex Farrell |
| **Version** | 4 – October 2026 |
| **Proposed review date** | October 2027 |
| **Equality objectives cycle** | 2024–2028 |

# Our Vision & Mission

*The heart of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – shared at the start of every school policy*




OUR VISION

*In the faithful care of St Joseph, Jesus prospered.*
***We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.***

OUR MISSION

St Joseph's is a Catholic primary; we are one family. We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

**As a school family we:**

- promote the partnership of home, school, church and community;
- pray together, grow in faith and live the Gospel values;
- respect and care for everyone and everything around us;
- value each child as an individual;
- encourage our pupils to develop active and creative minds;
- promote self-esteem and confidence;
- set high standards of learning;
- celebrate the achievements of each and every child.

> *St Joseph's is a Catholic School, in which each individual is valued, cherished and nurtured, as they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.*

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. Our values are rooted in the Gospel and underpin our relationships, teaching and learning, preparing our pupils as confident, happy citizens. In partnership with parents and the community, our purpose is to provide a high standard of education, recognising each person's talents and enabling them to fulfil their true potential.

Our Gospel Values are understood and respected by adults and children alike, as we learn and play alongside one another, showing love, care and forgiveness in all we do. At St Joseph's we focus on the following Gospel Values:

| Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term |
|---|---|---|
| **Honesty & Forgiveness**<br>The Prodigal Son<br>*Luke 15:11–32* | **Respect & Resilience**<br>The Three Wise Men<br>*Matthew 1:1–12* | **Community**<br>Sharing a Meal<br>*Acts 2:46–47* |
| **Thankfulness & Perseverance**<br>The Birth of Christ<br>*Luke 2:9–10* | **Generous & Proud**<br>The Good Samaritan<br>*Luke 10:25–37* | **Eloquent & Truthful**<br>Pentecost – The power of the Holy Spirit<br>*Acts 2:1–31* |
| | **Trust**<br>Parting of the Red Sea<br>*Exodus 14:21–22* | |

Our Mission Statement was written involving all stakeholders in our school – children, parents, staff and governors. It is clearly understood by all, underpinning all we do in school and determining our whole purpose and ethos. We firmly believe that wherever you are in our school you will see our mission statement being lived – in class, in the playground and in our interactions and love of each other.

# Document Control

| Approved by | Name | Signed | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Head Teacher** | Annette Savage | | |
| **Chair of Governors** | Alex Farrell | | |

| Version | Description | Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Original Equality Policy, Objectives and Action Plan | September 2024 |
| 2 | Review: new Chair of Governors, school profile updated | September 2025 |
| 3 | Reissued as Equality Statement and Scheme – Part 2 (Equality Policy) | October 2026 |
| 4 | Checked against the KAHSC model Equality Policy v3 (January 2026): duty to prevent sexual harassment of staff added (Section 9); EHRC sexual harassment and menopause guidance added to Referenced Guidance; Chair of Governors' name corrected. | October 2026 |

**Proposed review date:** October 2027. Equality objectives are reviewed annually and republished every four years (current cycle 2024–2028).

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# 1. Equality Statement

> *St Joseph's is an inclusive school: we focus on the well-being and progress of every child, and every member of our community is equally valued. Our commitment to equality flows from our Catholic faith and the Gospel teaching that every person is made in the image of God and has equal dignity.*

The Equality Act 2010 gives us a framework for valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also helps us keep tackling disadvantage and underachievement. These duties reflect international human rights standards set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach rests on seven principles:

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|---|---|
| 1 | **All learners are of equal value**, whether or not they are disabled, and whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or status, sex, gender identity, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. |
| 2 | **We recognise, respect and value difference.** We take account of differences and remove barriers people may face. Diversity is a strength to be respected and celebrated by all who learn, teach and visit here. |
| 3 | **We foster positive attitudes and relationships** and promote mutual respect between different groups and communities. |
| 4 | **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**, so that everyone feels respected and able to take part fully in school life. |
| 5 | **We observe good equality practice for our staff**, including in recruitment, promotion and professional development. |
| 6 | **We have the highest expectations of all our children** and expect every pupil to make good progress. |
| 7 | **We raise standards for all, especially the most vulnerable**, because improving education for vulnerable groups raises standards across the whole school. |

# 2. Purpose of the Policy and Legal Framework

This policy sets out how St Joseph's meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Act protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation because of a protected characteristic. A school must not treat pupils, staff or the wider community less favourably because of:

- sex;
- race;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- gender reassignment;
- sexual orientation;
- pregnancy or maternity.

Age, and marriage and civil partnership, are also protected characteristics. They do not apply to the school's provision for pupils but do apply to staff and the wider school community.

## The Public Sector Equality Duty (general duty)

This requires us, in everything we do, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between different groups.

### The specific duties

These require us to:

- publish information each year showing how we comply with the general duty (this policy and Part 1 of our Equality Statement and Scheme);
- publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective at least every four years.

### Our Catholic character

As a Catholic school, we may give preference in admissions to Catholic children and may require certain posts to be filled by practising Catholics, as permitted by the Act's exceptions for schools with a religious character. These exceptions never permit discrimination against anyone once they are part of our school community. Teaching about our faith is not discrimination, and all pupils of every faith or none are welcomed and respected.

We use a PSED checklist for staff and governors to assess our compliance. Further information is in the DfE guidance *The Equality Act 2010 and schools*.

## 3. Links to Other Policies

This policy is our key equality document. Further evidence of our commitment appears in our:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions arrangements
- Anti-bullying and Behaviour Policies
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) Policy
- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- School Development Plan and self-evaluation
- Recruitment and Selection procedures
- Governing Body minutes, parent and pupil surveys

We collect information on the following, broken down by protected characteristic where relevant and lawful: admissions; pupil attainment and progress; prejudice-related incidents; sanctions, including suspensions and exclusions; and staff recruitment, promotion and professional development.

## 4. Our School Profile

St Joseph's is a small Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster with 50 pupils on roll (October 2026), serving Frizington, Cleator Moor and surrounding rural villages. The school has served the community since 1968.

| Measure (October 2026) | St Joseph's | National |
|---|---|---|
| **Pupils on roll** | 50 (21 boys, 29 girls) | – |
| **Eligible for free school meals** | 26.0% | 24.9% |
| **Special educational needs** | 36.0% | 19.5% |
| **Education, Health and Care Plan** | 10.0% | 4.1% |
| **English as an additional language** | 4.0% | 23.8% |

Our area has few local amenities and lies within the 10% most deprived areas of England for Education, Skills and Training. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Our vulnerable groups include pupils with special educational, learning and medical needs. In 2025 all Reception pupils joined from the village nursery. Families tell us they value our family ethos and our free breakfast club (from 8.00am) and after-school club (until 4.30pm).

**Accessibility.** The building is on one level and accessible to wheelchair users, including the reception area. We have one accessible toilet with a shower for pupils who need personal care. When a pupil with SEND is due to join, we meet the family and work with Local Authority and health professionals so any adjustments to the building or curriculum are ready before they start.

**Admissions and recruitment.** As a voluntary aided school, the Governing Body is the admission authority; applications are coordinated by Cumberland Council. Staff recruitment follows Local Authority procedures, with advertising processed through the Council's HR team. We have a full teaching staff.

**Communication.** Information for parents is given verbally and in writing, and in other formats on request, such as another language or large print.

*Where we do not give figures for pupils or staff in small equality groups, this is to protect their privacy. We are not required to collect data we do not already collect routinely.*

## 5. Eliminating Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

- We take account of equality in admissions, suspensions and exclusions, how we educate pupils, and how pupils access facilities and services.
- We meet the reasonable adjustments duty for disabled pupils, so they are not placed at a disadvantage compared with their peers.
- The Head Teacher ensures appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so no one is discriminated against in employment, promotion or training.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent.
- We carry out Equality Impact Assessments on new policies, practices, events and decisions to check they do not create barriers for any protected group.

### Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

Our Behaviour and Attendance Policies take full account of the Equality Act. We make reasonable and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability. We monitor suspensions, exclusions and absence for over-representation of any group and act promptly on concerns.

### Prejudice-related bullying

We challenge all forms of prejudice and discriminatory bullying, including prejudice relating to disability and SEND, race, religion or belief, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation. The staff handbook explains how prejudice-related incidents are identified, recorded and dealt with. All bullying incidents are treated equally seriously and reported to governors.

## 6. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

- We know our pupils well and analyse data to identify and close gaps, for example for pupils making slower progress in early reading and number, while challenging all pupils to reach higher standards.
- We work with parents and carers, through admission meetings and home visits, to identify pupils with a disability or additional needs.

- We use Pupil Premium funding and targeted support to address disadvantage.
- We use a range of teaching strategies and adaptations so every pupil can access a broad and balanced curriculum, including trips, clubs and residentials.
- We are alert to the harm of negative language about race, sex, disability and sexuality.
- Our Accessibility Plan is reviewed every three years, or sooner after a significant change, and published on the school website.
- Where lawful and proportionate, we take positive action to address disadvantage faced by particular groups, in line with our equality objectives.

## 7. Fostering Good Relations

- We prepare pupils for life in a diverse society and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, rooted in Gospel values.
- We teach about difference, diversity, stereotyping and discrimination through RE, RHSE, PSHE and across the curriculum, including learning about other faiths.
- We choose resources that reflect diversity and avoid stereotyping.
- We celebrate our own culture and others' through assemblies, collective worship, displays, visitors and whole-school events.
- We give pupils opportunities to listen to a range of views and understand others' experiences.
- Through our charitable and parish work, pupils serve and connect with the wider community.

To make sure our equality work meets the needs of the whole community, we review feedback from parent questionnaires and meetings, staff surveys and training, the School Council and the Governing Body.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone in our school community, including visitors, is expected to support our commitment to equality. We provide training, guidance and information so they can.

### Governing Body

Governors ensure the school complies with the law and that this policy and its action plan are carried out. They keep equality under review across standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, staffing and the school environment. Governors set equality objectives every four years and review progress annually.

### Head Teacher and senior leaders

The Head Teacher implements this policy, ensures staff understand their responsibilities and receive training, and acts on any case of unlawful discrimination. A senior member of staff coordinates the policy day to day and monitors outcomes.

### Teaching and support staff

Teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive, collaborative ethos in their classrooms;
- challenge prejudice and discrimination, and deal fairly with any incidents;
- plan lessons and choose materials that give positive images of all groups;
- hold the highest expectations of every pupil and adapt teaching for those who find learning difficult;
- keep up to date with equality law relevant to their work.

Equality guidance is included in the staff handbook, reviewed annually and shared with all new staff.

### Pupils

Pupils are supported, in an age-appropriate way, to:

- understand this policy and help shape it through the School Council;
- treat everyone with kindness and respect;
- report discriminatory bullying or unkind behaviour to a trusted adult;
- support friends who experience unkindness or discrimination.

### Parents, carers and visitors

Parents, carers and visitors are expected to support our commitment to equality and follow this policy. Information is shared on the school website and parent notice boards.

## 9. Equal Opportunities for Staff

- All appointments and promotions are made on merit and ability, in line with the law and our Recruitment and Selection procedures.
- We aim, wherever possible, for our staff to reflect the diversity of our community.
- We work to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in employment, take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of our staff, and promote equality across our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and meet reasonable requests relating to religious observance.
- All staff, including support staff and those employed regularly by external organisations, receive appropriate training and professional development.

## 10. Equality Objectives

We publish SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) equality objectives on a four-year cycle; the current cycle runs **2024–2028**. Governors and senior leaders review progress each year. The objectives and action plan are published on our website and are available in other formats on request. In line with DfE guidance, we will consider publishing governing board diversity data.

## 11. Monitoring and Review

We update and republish this policy and the school profile annually, to reflect the September intake and any staffing changes. The equality objectives action plan is reviewed briefly each year and renewed at least every four years.

## 12. Sharing the Policy

This policy, with our equality objectives, is available on the school website, as a paper copy from the school office, in the staff handbook and on display for visitors.

## 13. Complaints

Complaints about this policy are handled under the school's Complaints Policy; staff complaints are handled under the Grievance Procedure. We take every complaint seriously, act to eliminate discriminatory behaviour, and report the nature of complaints and actions taken to the Governing Body.

# Referenced Guidance

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (Department for Education)
- Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission)
- Technical guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England (EHRC)
- Sexual harassment and harassment at work: technical guidance (EHRC)
- Menopause in the workplace: guidance for employers (EHRC)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- St Joseph's Equality Policy, Objectives and Action Plan 2024–2028, version 2

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