



St Joseph's College

Equality Policy & Objectives

Date Reviewed - Autumn 1st Half-Term 2023

Next Review Date - Autumn 1st Half-Term 2027

Policy Author - Mrs C Kane & Mr G Mantillas (Co-Headteachers)

Chair of Governors signature: Mr S Horsman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Horsman', is written over a faint, circular watermark or stamp.

*To inspire the minds of all generations through education, with fearless faith.
As a united community we demonstrate our Lasallian values of faith, service, and respect.*

Mission Statement

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Introduction

St Joseph’s College is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every young person and staff.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

At St. Joseph’s College, we incorporate our five core values:

- Respect for Faith
- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others
- Respect for Learning
- Respect for our Community

Our approach to equality and inclusion is based on the following eight key principles:

1. Everyone is equal regardless of disability status, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation and religion.

2. We recognise, respect and value differences; and understand that there is strength in diversity.
3. We actively promote and foster positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our community to feel a sense of belonging within the College and as a wider community.
5. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
6. We have the highest expectations of all our students. We expect that all students can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. We work to raise standards for all students, but especially for the most vulnerable.
8. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of students raises standards across the whole College.

1. Aim

St Joseph's College aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil, staff and members of the community, by treating them less favourably because of their 'Protected Characteristics'. The term "protected characteristics" is used as a way to refer to the personal characteristics to which the law applies.

Protected Characteristics are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.

- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Equality Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour:

- Direct discrimination - when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people.
- Indirect discrimination - when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. An example might be holding a parents’ meeting on a Friday evening, which could make it difficult for observant Jewish parents to attend.
- Harassment - is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.
- Victimization - when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a protected act”) in connection with the Act. A protected act might involve, for example, making an allegation of discrimination or bringing a case under the Act, or supporting another person’s complaint by giving evidence or information, but it includes anything that is done under or in connection with the Act. Even if what a person did or said was incorrect or misconceived, for example based on a misunderstanding of the situation or of what the law provides, they are protected against retaliation unless they were acting in bad faith. The reason for this is to ensure that people are not afraid to raise genuine concerns about discrimination because of fear of retaliation. A child must not be victimised because of something done by their parent or a sibling in relation to the Act.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents.
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years.
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher.
- Meet with members of staff for equality, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed.
- Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document.
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training.
- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues.

The Headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors.

- Monitor forms of discrimination ensuring all are dealt with appropriately and report back to governors.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
- Support the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs and deliver training as necessary.

The Teaching, Support and Operational Staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom/ office environment.
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- Fairly and professionally handle any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- Plan and deliver curricular and lessons that reflect the College's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability.
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all students.
- Support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult.
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- Attend any training requirements.
- Be confident in knowing how to report concerns.

All college staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in this policy.

4. Eliminating Discrimination

The college is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct. Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with accordingly and immediately in the same process as with breaches of other policies.

5. Fostering Good Relations

The college aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in Religious Education, Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum

areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.

- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and where possible, invite external speakers to contribute.
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- Developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach to an inclusion curriculum for all.

6. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

The college ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The college always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the college considers whether the trip will:

- Cut across any religious holidays,
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities,
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls.

7. Religious Observance

The college respects the religious beliefs and practices of all parent/carers, students and staff members, and as such, students and staff members will be allowed a day off for religious observance per academic year. As per all absence requests, these will be at the discretion of the Co-Headteachers with reasonable requests and notice.

A prayer room is available during the school lunchtime break for students which will be monitored by a member of staff. Students who wish to utilize this facility should inform the college in advance.

8. St Joseph's College as a Faith College

St Joseph's College is a religious college and has certain expectations to the Lasallian way. The admissions code states that schools/colleges who follow a particular faith and have not filled their places are NOT permitted to refuse children a space if they do not follow the faith.

For further information on our Admissions criteria, please refer to the Admissions Policy via our college website.

9. Recruitment

No job applicant or employee should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status or disability or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be fully justified.

It is essential that all those involved in the selection and interviewing of staff have regard for this policy in all their procedures and deliberations. The Panel should be balanced by gender, race and experience and, as far as possible, interviewers should have Safer Recruitment training. It is recommended that at least one member of the panel has undertaken such training.

Each Panel Member must have equal access to information and be involved in all stages of the selection process, including preparation of Job Description, Person Specification and the Advertisement.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **every four years** by the Co-Headteachers, Mrs C Kane and Mr G Mantillas.

At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.

Appendix - Equality Objectives

St Joseph's College

'To inspire the minds of all generations through education, with fearless faith'

- 1.** To implement a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, discrimination, and harassment based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Any such behaviour will be dealt with according to our behaviour policy.
- 2.** To provide training for staff to raise awareness of unconscious bias and promote inclusive teaching practices.
- 3.** To close gaps in attainment and achievement between students and all groups of students; especially students eligible for free-school meals, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Looked after Children
- 4.** To further improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas.
- 5.** To promote positive role models from diverse backgrounds within the school community, at all levels, to challenge stereotypes and promote equality that is representative of our wider community in ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability.
- 6.** To ensure that the school's academic curriculum and teaching materials are inclusive and representative of different cultures, histories, and perspectives without discrimination or bias.
- 7.** To implement measures to support the mental health and well-being of all students, including targeted support for vulnerable or marginalised groups in our dedicated Reflection Rooms.
- 8.** To promote an inclusive and diverse extracurricular programme that reflects the interests and needs of all students, regardless of their background or identity.
- 9.** To promote the participation and engagement of different groups of parents and communities in the life of our school.
- 10.** To regularly monitor and review the school's policies, practices, and outcomes to identify and address any disparities or inequalities.