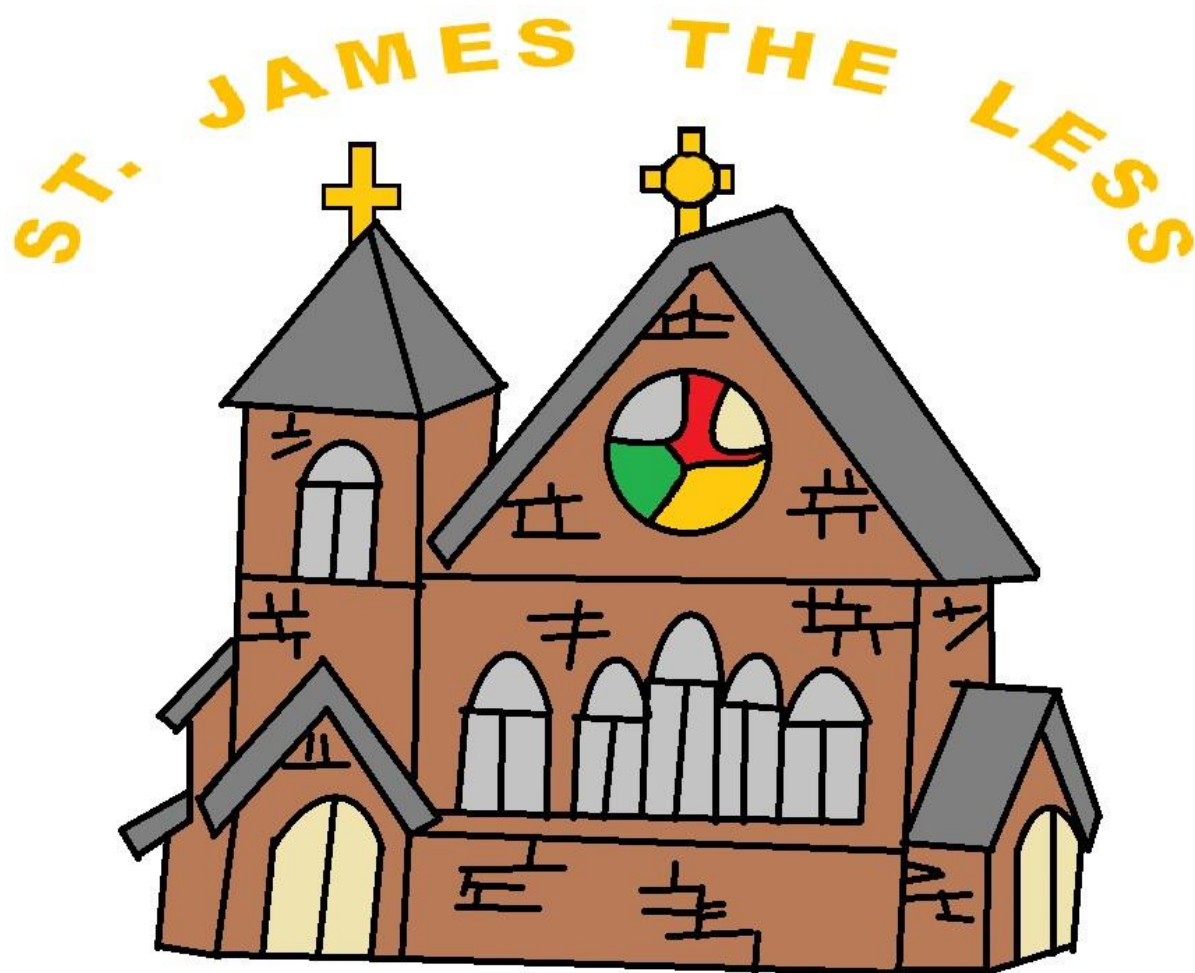


St James the Less RC Primary School



Equalities Policy

Autumn 2024

Updated Spring 2025

St James the Less RC Primary School

Equality Policy and Action Plan

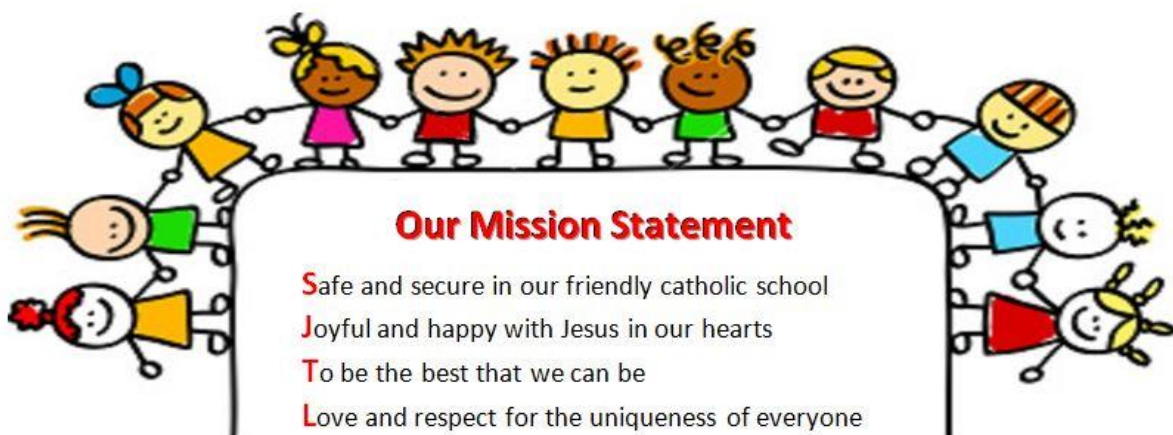
This Equality policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of St James the Less RC Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling 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.

At St James the Less RC Primary School equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Our Mission Statement



We pride ourselves on our inclusive ethos and community involvement. We engage in many activities at local, national and international levels to raise pupil's awareness of a diverse and ever-changing world. Our school prides itself on links with other schools through sports and fundraising and has excellent links within our local parish. Our children initiate their

own fundraising activities as well as supporting the focus campaigns in school. They have a strong sense of their awareness in a global community.

The School in Context

St James the Less RC Primary School originally occupied the same grounds as the church St James the Less until relocation in the late 1990's. There are seven classrooms with typically 30 children in each and the vast majority of pupils are white British and baptised Roman Catholic. Our current building is relatively modern with disabled access throughout. School grounds are beautiful and help shape our curriculum and enhance playtimes for children. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium grant is lower than average. School performs extremely well with most children entering school in EYFS with abilities in line or below local averages and good progress in all year groups means that children typically leave with abilities above local and national. Published data at End of Key Stage 2 has been above national levels for many years.

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At St James the Less RC Primary School, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community
- There is an *openness* of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school
- All within our school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, eg through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions
- All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to our 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 planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based 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: the pupils (School Council), parents, staff and governors.

Monitoring and Review

St James the Less RC Primary School is an 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 a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils/students which includes attainment/attendance data, exclusions, and involvement of extended learning opportunities, complaints of bullying, harassment or racist incidents. These are analysed by ethnicity, disability, gender and free school meals.

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.

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, disability, sexism, homophobia, gender orientation 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.

St James the Less RC Primary School 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 equality information in line with LCC guidelines for employment, training and promotion. *Please refer to our Confidentiality Policy.* No issues have arisen from data analysis in regard to this matter.

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 at St James the Less RC Primary School is the Headteacher

Their 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 locally in the Rossendale Valley and an increasing awareness of the global community
- 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 pupils 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 places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We will to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- The school provides 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 pupil
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

Curriculum

At St James the Less RC Primary School 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
- The principles of British Values are incorporated into our curriculum which fundamentally reinforce the principles of equality and diversity.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within St James the Less RC Primary School 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 school community

When ordering new resources and materials we will consider how they show equality as part of the criteria for assessment.

Language

We recognise that it is important at St James the Less RC Primary School 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 our school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age.

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 St James the Less RC Primary School to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- 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, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- 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 through coaching, mentoring and professional development
- 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 and a comprehensive staff handbook is reviewed annually and as need dictates
- 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(GOR) of that role. An aided school such as St James the Less is able to rely on this for some roles in school and in particular those roles that provide spiritual leadership. However this would not apply for all staff in School. GOR is determined by the bishop of Salford Diocese for St James the Less RC Primary School.

In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational qualification 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 with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Setting up, as part of the schools' commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of all stakeholders of the school community. This has been/will be developed to support the school with matters related to its equalities duties
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities
- 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 headteacher 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 headteacher 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 and staff 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

St James the Less RC Primary School will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

The Measurement of Impact of the Policy

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

Publicising the Policy and Plan

This policy will be on the school website and the internal teacher drive within school. Parents are informed of this via a newsletter and copies are kept in school.

Annual Review of Progress

We analyse data for all groups covering *ethnicity, disability and gender* and 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 and which will formulate the basis for the annual action plan.

Equality Impact Assessments

We will undertake equality impact assessments annually to ensure it meets the needs of all our service users and that no group (in relation to ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation) is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.

It will be reviewed every four years or more frequently if required

Equality Objectives Determined Autumn 2024 updated Spring 2025

1. To continue to narrow the gender gap for Reading, Writing and Maths at all Key Stages with particular focus on children in receipt of pupil premium grant
2. To further enhance current practice by working towards the Gender & Gender Variance and the Sexual Orientation Badge of the Lancashire Equality Mark.
3. To evaluate sex and relationships programme of study and measure its suitability
4. Increase awareness and understanding of equality issues among staff and pupils, using surveys and CPD opportunities

St James the Less RC Primary School is committed to creating an inclusive environment where every individual feels valued and respected. We believe that promoting equality is not only a legal obligation but a moral imperative that enriches our school community.