

**Our Lady's Catholic College  
Single Equalities Policy**

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March 2012

**Introduction**

This policy outlines the commitment of the governors and staff of the school to eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to promoting equality of opportunity and a culture of good relations and mutual respect.

This means that we need to do more than simply treat everyone equally, we need to understand and overcome the different barriers that lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils and we need to celebrate and value the different strengths and achievements of every member of our community.

This policy applies to the whole school community and will be reviewed annually.

**Statement of principles**

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school community. Everyone at Our Lady's should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Our Lady's Catholic College, equality is a key principle and we are determined to help create a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs or other beliefs, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. We are also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation.

As a Catholic school, Catholic pupils are given preference in our Admissions Policy. In addition, in order to maintain the distinctive Catholic character of the school, some preference may be shown at recruitment and promotion to certain positions for members of staff who are practising Catholics. There may also be some roles which qualify for an occupational qualification of the grounds of gender. With these

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exceptions, the school will endeavour to recruit a workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of various sections of the community in order to foster the understanding that can help us respond to the diverse needs of our population. Moreover once an individual becomes a member of our community as a pupil or member of staff no further preference except as above in the case of promotion to certain roles, will take place.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest levels of personal achievement. The achievement of pupils will be monitored – where appropriate – in light of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010. We will then use this data to target support where necessary in order to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

When selecting providers of goods and services, one of the factors we will take into consideration will be the extent to which we can be certain that the provider complies with equality legislation.

### **School in context**

We are a mixed gender comprehensive school and the exact proportion of boys to girls changes in each year. Present data shows clearly the relative achievements of both genders and some work has already been undertaken to address inequality of outcomes and in particular to support boys' achievement.

The vast majority of the pupils are White British but there is a significant minority of pupils from other countries, predominantly Eastern Europe and a small number from other locations worldwide. There is a small number of pupils who are British Asian. There is also a small but significant number of students from Europe who only study at Our Lady's for a short time. The linguistic profile of the school is therefore predominantly English, but a significant minority of pupils have English only as a secondary language. The school also has a significant number of Gypsy, Roma Traveller pupils and a small number of looked after children.

The school has a small number of physically disabled pupils and a proportionately larger number of pupils with learning difficulties.

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Staff and / or members of the governing body include representatives of the British Asian, other European, other worldwide and disability groups.

The most significant recent trend has been for a greater proportion of pupils to come from Eastern European backgrounds and for a greater proportion of pupils to have learning difficulties.

The school is wholly physically accessible.

The Learning Support Department encompasses a wide range of provision for pupils with various learning difficulties. A teaching assistant is employed specifically to help Polish students with their studies; teaching assistants are employed specifically to help our least physically able pupils.

The Catholic nature of the school has always ensured that there is an atmosphere of openness and welcome for everyone. The mutual respect between staff, pupils and staff and pupils is written into our Mission Statement and has been remarked upon by many visitors. There is also a deep rooted culture and highly evolved practice for supporting individuals who are experiencing difficulties for whatever reason which finds its origins in our Christian beliefs.

‘The school fosters a welcoming learning environment where all feel valued and treated with respect. There is close attention to the needs of vulnerable students and those who, for whatever reason, may be going through a hard time.’

Ofsted September 2009

‘Pupils at the college know themselves to be well cared for. The strong Catholic ethos of the college ensures that all members of the community, particularly the vulnerable, are supported and encouraged to do their best. Pupils are served well in this school and care is given to them as individuals. They feel themselves to be respected and supported. Different learning needs are recognised and catered for with flair and creativity. Pupils are able to participate in the Catholic life of the college in a range of different ways from which they receive great benefit.’

Denominational Inspection Report January 2010

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Provision for the personal and spiritual needs of all pupils is a particular strength of the school.

‘The spiritual development of staff and students is a priority.’

Denominational Inspection Report January 2010

**Teaching and learning**

The school is committed to providing 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
- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- Use material that reflects a range of cultural backgrounds without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude to disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Use sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination and promote justice and equality
- 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
- Ensure that pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities with no restrictions imposed by stereotype.

To enable the above:-

- All adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- Very high priority will be placed on provision for pupils with special needs

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- Pupils will be encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- Consideration will be given to the learning environment including displays, signage etc.
- The curriculum will provide opportunities to explore issues relating to identity and equality and steps will be taken to ensure it is accessible to all regardless of cultural background and linguistic and learning needs.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Equality Act 2010 has drawn together all current discrimination laws into one and sets out the 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection against discrimination:-

- Age (in relation to employment)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition the Act introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty to

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Improvements in our monitoring capability and structure now enable us to track the academic progress of individual and groups of children by gender, ethnic, disability, free school meals and other characteristics. The data we collect will then enable us to direct specific support in order to achieve equality of academic outcomes.

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The school will now ensure that the data it already collects regarding attendance, exclusions, involvement in extended learning opportunities, complaints of bullying and harassment and choices of options is collated by ethnicity, disability, gender and free school meals to ensure that we have the knowledge to provide effective additional support to promote equality of outcomes.

We will also publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty on our Website and in any other suitable communication media and we will prepare and publish equality objectives that are reviewed / revised annually.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The data gathered, intervention strategies and outcomes will be monitored by the relevant committees of the governing body and be externally assessed by Ofsted and Denominational Inspection.

On a day to day basis the Headteacher will co-ordinate the implementation of the Policy. He will ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and that they receive any necessary training. He will also co-ordinate the collation of information for presentation to the governors and ensure the governors' requirements in respect of further action and monitoring is implemented.

Every member of staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos within the school. They will challenge inappropriate behaviour or language and respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination or harassment. They will also ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.

In addition, all members of staff will treat each other with respect and take appropriate action if they witness inappropriate behaviour or language.

The school will also require visitors to adhere to this Policy and steps appropriate to the particular situation will be taken if they cannot commit to equality.

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### **Equal opportunities for staff**

With the exception of the situations specified above, the school is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities and principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. It is also determined to eliminate any discrimination or harassment in its employment practice.

All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality and good practice throughout the recruitment and selection process.

### **Measuring the impact of this policy**

The school will review its published equalities information each year and it will evaluate the impact of the actions it takes against its published objectives. The objectives themselves will be published at least every four years.

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Action Plan Spring 2012**

**1/** From the adoption of this Policy the following data will be analysed by race, gender, disability and free school meals:-

- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Complaints of bullying
- Choice of Options
- Involvement in out of hours learning
- Involvement in school trips
- Job applications, interviews and appointments
- Training opportunities
- Internal promotions / re-grades

**2/** By September 2012 initial analysis of the above will be used to identify the most pressing actions required to ensure equality of outcomes

**3/** From the adoption of this Policy major decisions when recorded will need to be accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment. Such decisions might include:-

- Curriculum changes
- Major spending plans
- School trip destinations
- Type of out of hours learning provided

**3/** A survey will be undertaken with EAL pupils to ascertain the effectiveness of additional language support provision. This survey will be used to improve provision and repeated to show the effectiveness of those improvements.



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## Annex A Equality Impact Analysis

This form can be used to screen proposed decisions / actions etc. and can be amended depending on the work being undertaken at the institution.

### 1. What is the proposed decision/action ?

### 2. What is the aim, objective or purpose of the decision/action?

### 3. Who defines or defined the decision/action and who implements it?

### 4. Is the decision/action applied uniformly throughout the school?    Yes            No

If 'no' what are the consequences in terms of the screening process?

### 5. Who are the stakeholders in relation to this decision/action (for example, Year 10 pupils/staff in Technology)?

### 6. What data is available to facilitate the screening of this decision/action?

### 7. Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by the following characteristics?

	Yes	No	Not known
Age			
Disability			
Gender			
Marital Status			
Racial group			
Religious belief			
Sexual orientation			

**Note:** A broad interpretation should be taken of the word 'evidence'. It should include anecdotal evidence and evidence derived from qualitative or quantitative analysis where available.

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**Please comment:**

**8. Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this decision/action?**

	Yes	No	Not known
Age			
Disability			
Gender			
Marital Status			
Racial group			
Religious belief			
Sexual orientation			

**Note:** A broad interpretation should be taken of the word 'evidence'. It should include anecdotal evidence and evidence derived from qualitative or quantitative analysis where available

**Please comment:**

**9. Have previous consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of this type create problems specific to them?**

	Yes	No	Not known
Age			
Disability			
Gender			
Marital Status			
Racial group			
Religious belief			
Sexual orientation			

**Please comment:**

**10. Is there an opportunity to promote equality of opportunity or community relations more effectively by altering the decision/action or by working with others?**

Yes

No

**Please elaborate:**

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**11. In the context of question 9 are there any relevant groups which you believe should be consulted?**

**Please specify:**

**12. What data are required in the future to ensure effective monitoring?**

**13. Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended.**      Yes  
No

**Please elaborate:**

**14. Any other comments on the policy and/or screening exercise?**