



School Equality Scheme

March 2023 - March 2027

**ST ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Vision and Values

Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School Mission Statement

Let it be known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school, the unseen but ever present teacher in all its classes, the model for its children, the inspiration for its staff.

We Grow and Learn with Jesus.

Introduction

At St Anthony's we will ensure that every pupil irrespective of race, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable. We welcome our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 which 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.

Values and Vision

We will work hard to help children to develop into confident, responsible and caring adults ready to be citizens in a multicultural society.

To achieve this we will:

- 1 respect the equal human rights of all our pupils and to educate them about equality;
- 2 work to promote positive attitudes to disability by enabling all pupils involved in the school community to contribute to and gain full access to all activities;
- 3 create an environment where respect and racial harmony mean that all pupils are able to reach their full potential;
- 4 promote gender equality in all aspects of school life by challenging stereotypes, achievement gaps and self-limiting aspirations;
- 5 take account of difference (for example, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, social context, vulnerable child status) and help overcome any barriers to learning in order to promote achievement and fulfilment in all our pupils;
- 6 respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the community;
- 7 in particular, comply with relevant legislation and frame and implement school policies and plans in relation to race and religious equality, disability equality, gender equality and community cohesion.

We will promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and in society, and prepare pupils at the school for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. In particular, we will aim to ensure that experience in school reflects the multicultural world in which we now all live and that children in the school will learn respect for others whatever their culture.

St Anthony's aims to be a cohesive community without the barriers of disability, gender, and race.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- mutual respect and good relations between all humans and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Our Curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs.

Special Educational Needs

A minority of children have particular learning and assessment requirements that could create barriers to learning. These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs or disability. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities as inclusively as possible.

Recognising difference

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

As an employer

We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example, in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development.

Transparency and consultation

We will publish the key elements of the Equality Scheme. We will also publish quantitative and qualitative information showing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (see Section 3 of this Scheme).

We will keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

We will consult and try to involve widely to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones.

Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

General Duty under the Equality Act 2010

We have a statutory duty to carry out our functions with due regard to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) 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.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties require schools to:

- publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010;
- set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:

- *age (for staff only)*
- *disability*
- *ethnicity and race*
- *gender (sex)*
- *gender identity and reassignment*
- *pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding*
- *religion and belief*
- *sexual orientation.*

Disability

At St Anthony's Catholic school we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Note: Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

Community Cohesion

In addition to addressing the duties outlined above, St Anthony's is committed to taking action on other equality strands to ensure that pupils understand others' cultures and value diversity, whilst at the same time promoting shared values and developing the skills of participation and responsible action.

As a Catholic school we work in close association with Holy Rood Catholic Church, Watford. The Parish Priest frequently says Mass within the school and the school attends Mass in the church. The Diocese of Westminster regularly assesses the spiritual teaching and achievements of the school. Staff of other faiths are employed to work within the values and ethos of the school.

We are committed to following DfE guidance in providing teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity of the immediate society and of the broader world that surrounds them.

Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

Chain of accountability

The Board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

Commitment to implementation

Headteacher, Mrs Elaine Harrold, retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively.

Every term, managers and key staff will report to the Headteacher on actions and progress.

Every 12 months there will be a report on equality and diversity at the Full Governors' meeting.

All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

Commitment to review

The school Equality Scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes as well as being updated annually. Following this regular impact assessment the whole Equality Scheme will be reviewed every 4 years.

Publish Information - specific duty to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty

At St Anthony's School we will publish information annually. The basic principle underlying the new specific duties is that of 'transparency', which ensures that we fulfil the aims of the Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. Transparency means being open about the information on which we base our decisions, on what to publish and how.

Equality information will be available on the school website. We will publish information on:

- evidence of staff training on the Equality Act 2010;
- copies of policies, for example, the Behaviour Policy or Anti-Bullying Policy or the Recruitment Policy, where the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct is expressly noted;
- aspects of the curriculum which explore different cultures and promote understanding of different religions;
- involvement with local communities.

We will also publish the results of the full scheme review every 4 years; that review will make proposals for future action.

Equality information will be available on the school website, in the newsletter and a copy of the full scheme will be available in the School Office.

Complying with legal duties

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. With regards to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled.

Engagement

Involving our learners, parents/carers and others

Engagement – Participation and Involvement

All pupils are engaged with equality issues and concerns through the curriculum, PSHEE, RHE and religious education, as well as through the general ethos of the school and its high achievement expectations.

Pupils contribute to the development and evaluation of the school's approach through questionnaires, giving their views and through consultations with the School Council.

All parents and carers will be made aware of the school's approach to embedding equality issues in the school's activities through the class weekly updates, Headteacher monthly newsletter, parent drop-ins, discussion with, the attitudes and behaviour of staff and through the attitudes of their children.

Specific actions

We value diversity within the community and we are continuing to develop a culture of trust and openness within our school community. The following are current actions, which we will continue to monitor and support.

Staff from St Anthony's work alongside others in the community for various functions:

- With charities and professional bodies specialising in needs relevant to pupils or families at the school
- Head teacher with PCSOs and local police to understand local problems and act as necessary.
- Headteacher/ Assistant Headteacher (RE Co-ordinator) to work with Holy Rood Church to teach and to plan for the children's spiritual progress within the Church community.

The Headteacher completes and analyses on-line data. This data is used to compare our figures from year to year to identify trends that may need addressing.

The Headteacher reports on incidents of harassment and bullying as required by Hertfordshire Education. Where necessary, the Headteacher instigates action to address any underlying issues that may need addressing.

The school Governing Body and senior leaders collect information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

The information is analysed in order to show how:

- children and young people with disability have access to educational opportunity, are included in school activities (curricular and extra-curricular) and are represented in organisations within the school, such as the School Council;
- staff with disability are represented within the various groups of employees and levels of seniority within the school.

Using information – Equality Impact Assessment, data and other information

Evaluating the impact in terms of the outcomes

All the St Anthony's school policies, functions and procedures will be equality impact assessed with regard to disability, gender and race at the time of review and issues arising will be carried forward into the equality action plan.

Method

- Consultation with Disabled stake holders in order that areas for change can be identified
- Analysis of information from data collection relating to disability and equality
- Tracking of children's progress by gender, disability, ethnicity, free school meals. Faith, EAL and ability when entering school
- Monitoring of behaviour
- Self Evaluations processes such as Lesson observations, workbook scrutiny etc. We need to identify positive outcomes in order to build on them.

Information will be given to the Governors each October and February as part of the Headteacher's report to the Governors.

Our School's Equality Objectives

Key priorities for action:

Objective 1

To ensure that the promotion of equality and diversity is embedded in the curriculum and through our school values.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure our curriculum promotes equality and diversity through core and foundation subjects.

To achieve this objective we plan to: To embed a new Racial Justice, Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator. To work through an action plan of how improvements can be made to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are promoting equality and diversity.

PROGRESS UPDATE SEPT 2025:

RJED Co-ordinator in place, attending relevant courses, and working alongside the INCo and RE Co-ordinator to ensure the curriculum reflects the promotion of equality and diversity. Whole School Electric Umbrella Assemblies and Year 1 and Year 5 Workshops in May 2025. Electric Umbrella re-booked for November 2025.

Objective 2

To improve the achievements of pupils with SEN in reading

Why we have chosen this objective: To raise the phonics achievement of SEN children in EYFS and KS1.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Embed a new phonics scheme 'Read, Write, Inc' in order to improve the reading skills of children with SEN.

PROGRESS UPDATE SEPT 2025:

Read, Write, Inc is well established and producing good results throughout EYFS and KS1. Identified children requiring additional support in Reading are targeted through 1:1 reading and 1:1 phonics tuition. Phonics Screening results from June 2025 – 88.2% (including 70% SEND pupils).

Objective 3

To raise awareness in school of different disabilities.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure all members of our school community feel included and represented.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Continue to highlight and celebrate Neurodiversity week and continue to strengthen our link with the Electric Umbrella Company. We will invite guest speakers in from charities/organisations.

PROGRESS UPDATE SEPT 2025:

Neurodiversity Week is marked in school, and we work closely with the Mental Health Support Team to promote workshops and targeted programmes within classes, such as Me and My Emotions and Emotion Explorers. Assemblies and workshops have been booked with the Electric Umbrella Company as stated above. Our RSE, PSHEE and RE curriculum celebrates differences and raise awareness of disability.

Objective 4

Train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the beginning of the next academic year. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

Why we have chosen this objective: To improve the knowledge and understanding of all school staff.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Seek out appropriate courses that we feel will improve understanding of issues surrounding equality.

PROGRESS UPDATE SEPT 2025:

Relevant staff and governors have attended safe recruitment training. Statutory updates are included in the school's Child Protection Policy.

Objective 5

To ensure training of staff to support children with disabilities

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure an accessible curriculum is well supported by staff.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Organise for TAs to attend relevant training e.g. sensory circuits, Lego therapy and Autism Bucket.

PROGRESS UPDATE SEPT 2025:

Staff have attended courses on Autism Bucket, Communication Circle, Brick Therapy, Comic Strip Conversations, Developmental Language Disorder, SCERTS, Selective Mutism, Intensive Interaction and Anticipation Games. In-house training programmes have also been completed to cascade knowledge, understanding and good practice.