

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Disability Equality Scheme

At St Bernadette's we believe that all individuals are special because they are made in God's image.

Differentness is an essential part of being human, 'male and female he created them'. Genesis 1:27

To make allowance for our differentness, and to be accepting of one another we live by our Catholic School Mission. There are elements that we can build on to help us achieve our aims, they are interlinked and mutually dependent; individuality, integrity, independence, dignity, integration and spirituality. Collectively these elements form a principle, that of Personal Value. As such we acknowledge that humanness is what makes all people beautiful.

VISION:

Our vision at St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is to provide an excellent standard of education, within a stimulating Catholic environment, by committed and caring professionals. Inclusion will always remain at the very heart of all our teaching and learning.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our Mission is to ensure a happy and secure learning environment where we celebrate the dignity and worth of all who work in and for the school.

As a Christian community we recognise that in loving others we love Jesus and so help each other to reach our full potential.

AIMS:

We aim to:

- Encourage and instil in our children a curiosity, enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning, which we hope will last for life.
- Achieve high standards of both learning and behaviour to enable all to reach their full potential.
- Provide a stimulating education designed to develop the whole child which enriches them socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, creatively, morally and spiritually.
- Foster a sense of trust and belonging within the school, parish and wider community.

As an inclusive Catholic Primary School we will not tolerate harassment or discrimination.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is treating an individual or group unfairly for reasons such as their race, colour, gender, age, or because of a disability.

Discrimination is against the law. School has policy guidance for Inclusion, Gender, Race Equality, Special Educational Needs, Anti-Bullying, Equal Opportunities and Disability Equality.

What do we understand by 'disability'?

'Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effects on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:-

- People with cancer or surviving Cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis.
- For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.

At St Bernadette's, Governors will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

As a Catholic School Community we will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.

This disability equality scheme sets out how the governing body, staff, pupils and parents will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Purpose and Direction of the Scheme

We will actively seek to meet the 6 elements of the duty to promote disability equality for disabled pupils, staff, parents and community users.

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons:
 - by undertaking performance management discussions and equal career opportunities for all teaching staff;
 - by undertaking appraisal discussions and equal opportunities for all staff;

- by planning, monitoring and evaluating Individual Education Plans to meet the needs of pupils with disability. Liaise effectively with external agencies to fully meet the needs of pupils. (See policy for SEN);
- by working proactively to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils;
- by planning, monitoring and evaluating impact of Action Planning for Accessibility as part of Whole School Improvement. Planning for disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use the school.

See Action Planning for Accessibility (pupils) and Disability Equality (this goes beyond pupils to include staff and community users).

- by living out school mission and positively promoting equality of opportunity day to day through teaching and learning, worship, religious education and PSHE and citizenship.

2. Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act:

- by awareness raising and staff training so all understand about disability in the wider community, this will include opportunities for staff to think about issues beyond pupil disability (see SIP action planning);
- by reviewing/revising policies and action planning in the light of monitoring/evaluation outcomes;
- by effectively communicating with all stakeholders and seeking their views;
- by looking at the rights and responsibilities relating to people with disabilities and showing how the Disability Discrimination Act works and why it is necessary (PSHE/Citizenship);

3. Eliminating harassment and bullying of disabled persons that is related to their disability:

- by raising awareness amongst staff and pupils of disability-related harassment;
- by promoting positive values and examining current attitudes towards people with disabilities;
- by examining the effects of negative attitudes on people's quality of life through scripture, within curriculum units e.g. PSHE/SEAL, citizenship, history, as appropriate to NC guidance;
- by considering how attitudes can be influenced through language and the media;
- by involving pupils in combating bullying (see anti-bullying policy guidance).

4. Promoting Positive Attitudes towards disabled persons:

- by pupils, staff, parents and governors modelling respectful attitudes to disabled people;

"This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water the seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay the foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects far
beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.
This enables us to do something,
and do it well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between
the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs,
We are prophets of a future not our own."

(Oscar Romero, the Martyred Archbishop of El Salvador)

- by presenting positive images in the school environment through display (golden rules).

5. Encouraging participation in all aspects of school/public life:

- by ensuring curriculum entitlement for all pupils e.g. school visits, extra curricular provision (accessibility planning);
- by providing all pupils, parents/carers, with a voice, ensuring disabled pupils and parent/carers are represented on working groups – school council, SEN group, disability equality working group;
- by encouraging disabled people participation.

6. Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment:

- by amending the curriculum timetable to meet the needs of disabled pupils e.g. physically disabled – swimming all year, time out provision for pupils with Autism;
- by providing special arrangements, as necessary, for disabled pupils at breaks and lunchtimes;

- by seeking to find knowledge regarding parent adjustment needs;
- by interviewing disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements of the job;
- by providing additional staffing or training for disabled pupils.

Involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents – Gathering Information

At St Bernadette's we have involved pupils, parents/carers, external agencies (LEIS) and the community users in the development of the disability equality scheme and action planning for disability and accessibility. This was carried out by:

- raising awareness and providing information about disability equality;
- meetings with parents/carers who have pupils with disabilities;
- discussions/meetings with pupils with disability;
- seeking views of community users;
- seeking views from external agencies e.g. LEIS for pupils with SEN.

Information gathering

Groups will meet at least annually to review and reflect on the effect of the school's policies on:

- the educational opportunities available to and the achievement of disabled pupils;
- recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees;
- the arrangements for using information to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes.

Confidentiality

Pupils, staff and parents/carers are re-assured about confidentiality. School follows guidance from Lancashire County Council with regard to the provision needs for pupils with disability during exam times.

Impact Assessment/Recording

Impact assessment is a systematic approach to the analysis of the effects of policy, practice and procedure for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers. Disability Action Planning which includes Accessibility Planning is monitored by the Governing Body as part of Whole School Improvement Planning. Progress and evaluation of Action Planning is shared with parents/carers in the School Prospectus.