Equality and Objectives Policy
Date: November 2026 – pending approval 16/11/26

Relevant supportive documents and legislation:

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 and schools - Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) April 2011

SEND Code of Practice, 2014
Education and inspection Act 2006
Education Act 2002

NASSEA Steps (Northern Association of Support Services for Equality and Achievement):

FACT First Assess Communication Tool (MK)

Disability and Discrimination Policy and Accessibility Plan 2026-27

SEND Policy 2026

PSHCE SMSC British Values Policy 2026

Date created:	10/07/2012 approved updates 06/07/2013, 9/10/1 , 19/11/18 and 6/11/19 30/11/20, 22/11/21, Nov 22, Nov 23, Nov 24, Nov 25
Responsible:	Headteacher
Date Ratified:	9/10/17
Responsible Committee:	Full Governing Board – Statutory Leads
Date to be reviewed:	Every 4 years unless otherwise required due to new legislation (Action Plan reviewed annually)
Statutory Policy:	Y

1. Aims

At St. Bernadette's Catholic school, we are committed to ensuring opportunity and fairness for all equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At St. Bernadette's we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act to make the law simpler and to remove inconsistencies. This makes the law easier for people to understand and comply with. The act also strengthened protection in some situations.

The act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

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

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations. This policy and plan demonstrates how at St. Bernadette's we intend to comply with this Act.

2. Contextual Information

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary is a larger than average school, there are currently 365 pupils on roll (including nursery). Oct census 2026 shows that 64 pupils (18%) have had any period of targeted eligibility for free school meals. 48 children (13%) have had any period of expended eligibility for free school meals. Data in October

2026 indicates that 16% of pupils (57 pupils) receive SEN provision. The school population currently has 8 EHCPs in place (2%) and we are awaiting one application outcome. Of the school pupil population 48% (177) are males and 52%(188) are females. The October census 2026 identified that 44% of pupils speak EAL with 34 different languages spoken within our school community.

The table below outlines the ethnicity of the school pupils.

Ethnicity	% of pupils on roll by ethnic group
Any other Asian Background (AOTH)	3%
Any other Black background (BOTH)	4%
Any other Mixed background (MOTH)	3%
Black Ghanian (BGHA)	14%
Black Nigerian (BNGN)	14%
Black British (BBRI)	0%
Black Caribbean (BCRB)	1%
Chinese (CHNE)	2%
Indian (AIND)	2%
Italian (WITA)	1%
Other Black African (BAOF)	4%
Other ethnic group (OOEG)	2%
Other White British (WOWB)	1%
Pakistani (APKN)	0%
Refused (REFU)	3%
Not obtained (NOBT)	19%
White English/British) (WENG/WBRI)	11%
White Irish (WIRI)	1%
White and any other Asian background (MWAO)	1%
White Eastern European (WEEU)	1%
White Western European (WWEU)	1%
White other (WOTW)	11%
White Traveller (WIRT)	0%
White and Black African (MWBA)	3%
White and Black Caribbean (MWBC)	0%
White and Indian (MWAI)	0%
White and Pakistani (MWAP)	0%

The workforce consists of

Ethnicity	% of staff members by ethnic group
Any other Asian Background (AOTH)	3.7%
Black African (BARF)	5.6%
Any other Black background (BOTH)	1.9%
Indian (AIND)	7.4 %
Refused (REFU)	1.9%

White English/British) (WENG/WBRI)	66.7%
White Irish (WIRI)	3.7%
Any other white background (WOTH)	9.3%
Male 9% FEMALE: 91 %	

3. Turning equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out within the attached Action Plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender, disadvantage and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure opportunity and fairness of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. The Admission's Policy is published on our website for each year of entry and has criteria for admission explained clearly. Any changes to the policy follow at least a 6-week period of consultation.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy and Suspensions and Exclusion Policy. We closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with. The Suspensions and Exclusion policy is published on our website.

4. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St. Bernadette's.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

5. Disability

This section must be read in conjunction with the school's SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan.

6. Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of all stakeholders. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET;
- Feedback from the pupil leadership teams, Mini Vinnies team, RSHE lessons and pupil questionnaires.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Support Plans (SEND ISPs) and Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at Governing board meetings.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors is to:

- Set out its commitment to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- Seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- Welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- Ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of the protected characteristics.
- Prioritise resources to this end.

The role of the headteacher is to: (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- To comply with the Equality Act and she is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Act and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- To ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- To promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promote respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- To treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching is to:

- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect
- Maintain understanding of their responsibilities under the Equality Act through annual training
- Strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.
- Support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

8. Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

9. What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as:
'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

10. Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

This applies to children and staff.

11. Review of progress and impact

The Policy has been agreed by our Governing Board. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will agree at least three objectives that the school has agreed to pursue through an Equality Action Plan. The Equality Objectives and Action Plan are published via this policy on our school website https://www.stbernadettesschool.com/school-

policies/ These will be reviewed and progress against our Equality objectives reported annually to the school's Governing Board, updated below.
We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by First Language, sex and SEND, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

12. Publishing the Equality Action Plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements we will:

- publish the school's Equality Objectives on the school website via this policy and Action Plan;
- raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available.

Please see Appendix 1 for 2025-29 Objectives and Action Plan with review for 2025-26

Appendix 1 Equality Action Plan (2025 - 2029)

Objectives (Intent)	Actions (Implementation)	Timescale	Review (Impact)
Encouraging girls to consider non-stereotyped career options **PSED aim Link:** Eliminating discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	STEAM activities across the year Visits from link STEAM companies to different year groups e.g. network rail Guest speakers from STEAM companies Careers fair with a range of stalls from STEAM related companies Working with Primary Futures to provide opportunities to address stereotyping of careers	Ongoing across year	Visit to Network Rail with DP and girls group Follow up visit by Network Rail into school for year 5 and year 6. Guest speakers visits and business links throughout the year (eg VW and Nifty Lift with workshops) and guest speakers Annual School Careers Fair addressed gender stereotypes and involved influential women in STEAM careers (Primary Futures) Annual MK STEM event attended by all Y5/6 Anglian water talk- Y5/6 Girls attended- water warriors matching out school virtues. STEM festival at unity place Autumn 1. Several female parent speakers in during British Science week to encourage key jobs.
Improve accessibility for those with physical and sensory disabilities **PSED aim Link:** Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	Visual Impairment (VI) training for all staff Manual handling training for key staff working with child in wheel chair Fitting of changing unit for physical disabled child Links with specialist teachers across the year for advice and support (Inclusion and Intervention team) Environmental audit conducted from VI team Links with Occupational Therapist and Physio Therapist- regular meetings across the year and advice on key stretches and exercises. Ramp outside key areas – including prayer garden	Autumn Ongoing across year	All staff have been trained on VI – any relevant new staff are briefed accordingly Staff working with child in wheelchair and changing table appropriate training Changing unit fully fitted Ongoing support and advice from I&I, physio, VI and OT team – staff understand how to support confidently and effectively High Vis tape updated and in key areas High Vis vests worn by all staff and key chn on playground for break and lunch times so that they are easily visible and identifiable Ongoing use of specialist equipment is in place to support everyday activities in school for VI and Physically disabled children. New sensory garden completed with ramp access

	Trial muted/neutral classroom display/environments to assess impact on pupils' focus and self-regulation High vis vests worn on FS and KS1 playground by all staff Hi Vis tape around key parts of school Use of specialised pencils, scissors, mirroring software and writing slope Develop a school sensory garden Specific staff to carry out training relating to reasonable force from 1 April 2026. Plus, understand when you might need to use reasonable force and how to use de-escalation techniques effectively. Develop a SENCo working group across MK Catholic Schools Attend SENCO LA Quadrant Meetings		New ramp to access forest school area Clearly defined disabled parking spaces in place to support parents of children with disabilities/parents with disabilities – require re-painting 2026-27 Chill out area ramp now added.
Fostering good relations across all characteristics by providing a support network accessible to all parents of pupils with protected characteristics **PSED aim Link:** Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who do share a protected characteristic and people who do not	SENCo to provide regular parent drop-in and information sessions for parents Parents sign-posted to other websites/resources for support inc SEND local offer at MK council. Questionnaires for parents to fill in after sessions. Resources and slides from sessions posted on school website for further access. Develop a parent information board in the reception area. Offer the Early-Bird Plus programme (national Autistic Society) for parents of autistic children / those on pathway to diagnosis.	Ongoing across year	Parents have access to a range of information and support services offered by LA and charities. Website is informative and supporting for parents Theme days have taken place to support parents and increase their knowledge and awareness – eg . Super Snooze Tuesday Sleep theme and Autism Awareness day. 2025-26 Early Bird + programme run two cycles Aut 2025 successful International Evening. Benedict's law means this will not continue.

	Offer MHST sessions for parents – focus on sleep and diet Hold annual International evening – sharing of food, music, cultural dress, traditions etc Questionnaire for parents of other faiths regarding provision for their children Look at new website and available translation tools for accessibility		
Ensure staff have sufficient skills and understanding to support the school in achieving the above objectives **Links to all 3 PSED Aims**	Weekly staff meetings- inc Safeguarding, DP, SEND and vulnerable children focus. Key INSET foci for all full-time staff Specialist support and training from MK council and PEP:MK and external professionals on-site SEND support staff regular training bursts Support staff weekly meetings Half termly SMT and SLT meetings SENCo to provide drop-in sessions for staff to talk about specific pupil needs and how best they can be met SENCo to work with staff to develop pupil profiles across each class to have clear picture of all strengths and needs of pupils Launch expression of concern form for staff to access involvement from SENCo Introduce OAP (Ordinarily Available Provision) Range of SEND training modules for staff 2026-27	Ongoing across year	Staff are well supported and well informed to support children and families.