

St. Mary's Catholic
Primary School
Ysgol Catholig
Santes Fair



Strategic Equality
Plan.

Our Mission Statement



As a Catholic family,
we will do our best to live and
learn as Christ taught us.

Our aims are designed to allow us to live out the Mission Statement.

School Aims

- a. To create a community where love, peace and joy are present and to be true to the values of the Gospel and to make our Catholic faith alive by building such a community.
 - b. To develop a dynamic interaction between home, school and parish and provide a formation for each child to realise their full potential in all aspects of spiritual and moral development.
 - c. To develop a zest for life and an enjoyment of learning.
 - d. To allow children to respect all forms of life.
 - e. To achieve high standards in academic learning.
 - f. To develop creativity and a love of art, music and drama.
 - g. To encourage children to learn physical skills and a knowledge and control over their own bodies to compete against themselves and others in order to raise their performance.
 - h. To have experience of the Welsh Language and be introduced to Welsh culture and others from around the world to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of our school.
 - i. To make sense of the world around them scientifically and by understanding other people, their history and their environment.
 - j. To foster good attitudes and appropriate behaviour, manners and dress.
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Introduction and Background to St. Mary's Catholic Primary School's Strategic Equality Plan

At St. Mary's School we believe that 'equality' does not mean treating everyone the same. It means understanding and tackling the different barriers to equal opportunities that different people face so that everyone has a fair chance to fulfil their potential. For us, as a Catholic school, this principle relates to the need to respect the God given dignity of every individual human being.

The aim of the new equality legislation is to ensure that equality is mainstreamed into the work of public authorities such as schools when providing services. This in turn should result in more appropriate services and outcomes taking into account individuals' backgrounds including their race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, transgender status, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

The government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has made it clear that public bodies must mainstream equality in both their internal and external functions.

We are committed to these principles and to mainstreaming equality and welcome these legislative changes. We are committed to providing high quality services to children and parents to whom we provide services and to being a good employer. We also believe that mainstreaming equality issues will ensure that we deliver our aims in a more meaningful way.



Mr Lyndon Watkins
Headteacher

Mr David Bolton
Chair of Governors

1 Our distinctive character, values, priorities and aims

1.1 School values.

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage and civil partnership. 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 and we will use this data to support pupils, to raise standards and to 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. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

1.2 Characteristics of our school.

St. Mary's is a diverse, thriving Catholic community. Some 82% of pupils are baptised Catholics. Over one third of our pupils have English as an additional Language (EAL) and there are 16 nationalities represented. We currently have

16% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM). None of our families have Welsh as a first language at home. Currently, 26 of our pupils(10%) have an Additional Learning Need (ALN).

1.3 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice.

As well as the specific actions set out in this document, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

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 according to the various protected characteristics and action any gaps;
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- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality 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 the various protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice in line with our Catholic ethos;
- 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;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

1.4 Setting our equality objectives

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all learners, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of our **Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics', and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our school plans and policies.

In setting the equality objectives for this school, we will take due regard to the Equality Act general duty:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this means:
 - a. removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

- b. taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - c. encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Our SEP and Equality Objectives are set in the light of:

- The regional equality objectives identified in **Appendix 1**;
- views expressed by stakeholders that have been involved in the development of the scheme;
- issues arising as a result of our analysis of our pupil data, e.g. attainment data of boys v. girls;

The delivery of our SEP will contribute to all of our actions and commitments to:

- raise standards;
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes for children and young people;
- improve outcomes as described within the Children and Young People Plan (CYPP);
- promote community cohesion.

Our School Equality Objectives are set out in **Section 5 and Appendix 2**.

2 Responsibilities

2.1 Governing Body

The governing body has set out its commitment to equality and diversity in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school, in carrying out its mission, is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on the various protected characteristics. The governing body:

- seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school whilst maintaining the right to advertise for practising Catholics in relation to Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts according to Section 60 of the School Standards and Framework Act of 1998.
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school.

In order to meet its reporting responsibility, the governing body will report on the progress of the SEP annually, as part of its Annual Report to parents.

2.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- implementing the school's SEP, supported by the governing body in doing so.
 - ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Act and are fully informed of our school's SEP and equality objectives.
 - ensuring that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
 - promoting the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promoting respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
 - treating all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, according to the Authority's and school's policies.
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2.3 Staff – teaching and non-teaching

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of staff contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's SEP.
- striving to provide material that gives positive images based on the protected characteristics and challenges stereotypical images.
- challenging any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents as prescribed in the LA and school's policies, e.g. reporting of racial incidents.
- supporting the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

3 Information gathering and Engagement

3.1 Purpose and process

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance, so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

Engagement is based on the information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take particular steps to ensure disabled children and young people, parents and carers are involved as is their entitlement. The reason that this progress is important is to understand the full range of needs of the school community.

3.2 Types of information gathered.

A wide range of information may be gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- an analysis of the responses received from pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and community groups following the distribution of a questionnaire to determine equality issues. The questions included in the questionnaire do not highlight specific protected characteristics, but seek to obtain stakeholders' views across the board.
- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics, if possible and appropriate. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet data protection requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language.
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups.
- children and young people's views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution.
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum.
- sports and activities choices of all groups.
- uptake of enrichment activities by group.
- exclusions data analysed by group.
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue.
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees.
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion.
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage.

3.3 Engagement.

The school involves **stakeholders** including children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country.

The views of stakeholders and other equalities related groups are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

On-line questionnaires were sent to parents / carers. Staff and governors completed questionnaires. Pupils complete annual on-line questionnaires.

Meetings were held with staff and governors to explain the process and provide further information and guidance as required.

Questionnaire responses were taken into consideration when developing objectives for the plan.

4 Equality Impact Assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed plans and policies in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's plans and policies are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

As part of this school's compliance of the specific duties of the Act, we will continue to undertake impact assessment of all new policies and plans prior to them being implemented. Similarly, we will impact assess our existing policies and plans whenever they are reviewed. As such, impact assessments are incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of every policy.

Where impact assessments have been done, they will influence changes to policy and the review of the SEP itself.

5 Objectives and Action Plans

Our chosen Equality Objectives are to:

1. *Reduce any Gaps in attainment between Boys and Girls.*
 2. *Review the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.*
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3. *Improve access to information and physical access to schools and other learning settings for pupils, parents and staff.*
4. *Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among Pupils, Staff and Governors.*

We have action plans covering all relevant protected characteristics (Appendix 2). These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

Our action plans are cross referenced with, and where appropriate incorporated into the School Development Plan, which ensures that they are checked, monitored and evaluated systematically.

The action plans show:

- objectives and specific actions;
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);
- clear timescales;
- who has lead responsibility;
- resource implications;
- specified dates for impact assessment and review.

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the SEP on a regular basis, through the governing body and with ESTYN when the school is inspected.

6 Publication and reporting

The school provides a copy of its SEP and its action plan to meet its equality objectives in a range of formats and actively makes it available to parents/carers and others, including those identified as difficult to engage. The school prospectus includes a reference to the SEP and the values underpinning it.

The school reports annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the SEP itself on school ethos and practice within the school. This is undertaken as part of the Governors' Annual Report.

All data collected will be used solely for the purpose of analysing trends by protected characteristic in performance, take-up and satisfaction with services offered by the school or local authority. Such information will be stored separately from personal information which identifies the individual. In order to

protect the identities of individuals when trend information is published no counts containing less than 5 individuals will be published.

7 Monitor and Review

As part of our responsibility to monitor the SEP, we commit to:

- revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SEP and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;
- using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SEP informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans. This process continues to:

- involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;
- be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;
- use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.

We will undertake a full review of our SEP by September 2025.

Appendices

App. 1 Regional Equality Objectives

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APPENDIX 1

Regional Equality Objectives

1. Reduce Gaps in attainment between Boys and Girls and between other protected groups as identified in local data

National research indicates inequalities in the levels of attainment between genders, ethnicities and between disabled people and non-disabled people. Boys, black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils and disabled children all perform poorly on average compared to other groups.

2. Implement new Welsh Government Bullying Guidance and reduce Identity based bullying in schools

The All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools (WG 2009) found a range of identity based bullying in schools across Wales. Examples include 22% of year 6 pupils had been 'bullied in a homophobic way'; 7% of year 7 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to learning difficulties' and 3% of year 10 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to race or ethnic origin'.

3. Reduce gaps in levels of attendance between different protected groups as identified in local data

Work is currently underway to improve data analysis which can identify differences in attendance trends between groups of pupils with different protected characteristics. Several reports have been commissioned nationally which examine attendance of Gypsy Traveller and Irish Traveller children. Each found that attendance was lower among these children.

4. Reduce the number of NEETs

Wales has a higher proportion of people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) among the 16-24 year old group than England. Being NEET is a major disadvantage to young people.

5. Improve access to information and physical access to schools and other learning settings for pupils, parents and staff.

Head teachers and Governors need to be confident that all pupils can reasonably access services and are not unjustifiably disadvantaged by having any of the protected characteristics. Schools already have Disability Access Plans in place. However, schools and local authorities through the public sector equality duties need, to cater for the needs of all protected groups so the scope is wider than Disability Access Plans.

6. Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among Pupils, Staff and Governors.

None statutory guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duties states that ‘a listed body in Wales (including all Schools) must make appropriate arrangements to promote knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties amongst its employees.’ In the school context we wish to extend this to include pupils and Governors.

¹ EHRC, How Fair is Wales? (2011) p.6 and 40-8

Objective 2: Review Bullying Policy in light of the Welsh Government's Guidance.
Our Research:
<p>The All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools found a range of identity based bullying in schools across Wales. Examples include 22% of year 6 pupils had been 'bullied in a homophobic way'; 7% of year 7 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to learning difficulties' and 3% of year 10 pupils had been 'bullied in some way due to race or ethnic origin'.¹</p> <p>Local Information from St. Mary's demonstrates that 97% of pupils feel safe in school and that 93% feel that the school deals well with bullying.</p>
Data Development:
<p>We currently report to the local authority any incidents of race related bullying.</p>
Information from Engagement:
<p>98% of parents feel that their child is safe at school and that behaviour is generally good.</p>

This objective will be judged to be successful if...

- Systems are in place to recognise, report and deal with identity based bullying.
- The School's new policy is in place and functioning well.

Actions

Code	Description	Action Owner	Start date	End date
2.1	Update anti-bullying policy and practices in light of Welsh Government guidance <i>Embedding anti-bullying work in schools in Wales.</i> <i>A consultation will take place involving all stakeholders. Edits will be made accordingly. The FGB will meet to approve the policy.</i>	SMT / Senedd/ Parents	Autumn 2020	Summer 2021
2.2	Share the policy with all stakeholders. It will be posted on the school website.	All staff, pupils and parents.	January 2021	March 2021
2.3	Monitor the effectiveness of the policy.	SLT	March 2021	On-going

Objective 5:

Improve access to information and physical access to schools and other learning settings for pupils, parents and staff.

Our Research:

Head teachers and Governors need to be confident that all pupils can reasonably access services and are not unjustifiably disadvantaged by having any of the protected characteristics. Schools already have Disability Access Plans in place. However, schools and local authorities through the public sector equality duties need to cater for the needs of all protected groups so the scope is wider than Disability Access Plans.

Local Information from St. Mary's suggests that access within the school itself is very good but that there are problems relating to traffic issues at dropping off and collection times. Internal steps provide a possible obstacle; the LA's policy in relation to this is that they will take each case on its merits as they occur in relation to making alterations.

Information from Engagement:

Information from stakeholder questionnaires didn't identify any concerns regarding access to the school but concerns were raised over parking issues in the vicinity of the school.

This objective will be judged to be successful if...

- We can demonstrate that disabled children and visitors have the same opportunity to access all areas of the building safely and that communication methods meet their needs.

Actions

Code	Description	Action Owner	Start date	End date
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5.1	Audit the current signage to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Make any necessary changes.	HT/Site Manager	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021
5.2	Review processes of communication to ensure that protected groups are not disadvantaged in any way (e.g. large print newsletters, both sets of parents, where families are separated, receive reports etc if required)	HT/ Senior Administrative Assistant	Spring 2021	On-going
5.3				

Objective 6:

Raise awareness of equality and diversity issues among Pupils, Staff and Governors.

Our Research:

Statutory guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duties states that 'a listed body in Wales (including all Schools) must make appropriate arrangements to promote knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties amongst its employees.'¹ In the school context we wish to extend this to include pupils and Governors.

Local Information from St. Mary's shows that staff and Governors have appropriate equality policies in place and that staff and governors would benefit from some training in this area.

Data Development:

N/A

Information from Engagement:

Nearly all stakeholders felt that equality issues were dealt with effectively by the school. Some parents felt that the school didn't communicate its policy on sex education effectively enough. A few staff and governors felt that they would benefit from more specific training in the area of equality too. Nearly all pupils felt that pupils were treated equally and fairly in school.

This objective will be judged to be successful if...

- Governors and staff receive updated equality training.

Actions

Code	Description	Action Owner	Start date	End date
6.1	Arrange updated Equality Training for Governors.	HT/Clerk to GB	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021
6.2	Assess teachers' training needs in this area.	HT	Summer 2021	On-going
6.3	Work with the local authority to identify providers and organise necessary training.	HT/Clerk to Governors	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021

SCHOOL ACCESS PLAN

Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Goal Achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to improve parking facilities for users of the school by re-marking the designated bay within the car park for disabled users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark/label appropriate space in car park. To be made available for disabled driver/passenger as and when necessary. Space is not available to always keep this place empty; rather, it will be used when needed. 	<p>Parking for a car/taxi with a disabled driver and / or passenger is added and improves the physical accessibility of the school premises from the car park.</p>	<p>Summer 2021</p>	<p>Accessibility to the school building is maintained and improved for disabled visitors.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that easy access to/egress from all classrooms is maintained and improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of each classroom to be completed by Caretaker in relation to the doors and to safe pathways leading to them. 	<p>Access and egress is maintained and improved for pupils, staff and parents.</p>	<p>Summer 2021</p>	<p>Access/egress is greatly improved and new safe routes from classrooms in emergency situations are identified.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage – evaluate current external and internal signage. Identify any improvements needed and implement changes as are required (take particular note of the contributions from parental questionnaire on this theme). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek advice form LA / Health & Safety Officer on present regulations before replacing / renewing signage. 	£300 from school building budget to support changes. Signage is clearer for all.	Autumn 2016	Signage improved for all stakeholders.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit signs, directions, handrails, lighting and specifically designated furniture throughout the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make any necessary changes including the re-painting of handrails in line with LA advice. 	Audit of needs in place to draw up future spending plan as required.	2021-22	Physical accessibility of the school building made simpler for visitors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to audit policies in line with Equality Act 2010 to ensure that there are no discriminatory policies, phrases, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors will maintain a rolling programme to review policies. Compliance will be a part of this work. LA advice will be taken if required. 	School policies are audited on a rolling programme and made free of discriminatory terms or phrases, procedures and practices in line with the Strategic	2021-2024	Facilities are compliant with health and safety regulations.

procedures or practices.		Equality Plan (& Equality Act 2010) to enable full access to the curriculum for all		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition meetings with Feeder Comprehensive staff re ALN pupils (inc additional transition days where appropriate) will be held to ensure that relevant information is shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition meetings will include information sharing on children with ALN and those with protected characteristics (lead role for FEO). 	Additional transition meetings arranged for pupils with specific needs which include additional transition days and activities as appropriate	2021-2025	Policies comply with the Equality Act.
			2016-2018	Quality of transition is enhanced for all pupils.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve ICT provision across the curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase ratio of computers across school. Consult with IT support services. Emphasis on tablet devices and chrome books. 	Improved access to ICT for all pupils	2021-2025	All pupils benefit from greater access to high quality ICT provision.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">To ensure that any alterations to the building comply with Accessibility Regulations and needs of the school .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HT & GB work closely with LA officers and seek advice when any changes to buildings are deemed necessary.	Ensure that any changes that take place conform to the needs of the school and individuals therein.	2021-2025	Physical accessibility to school building improved.
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