



St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School

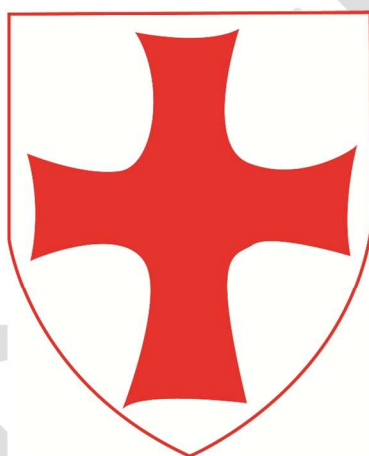
*Aiming for Excellence - Being the Best We Can Be*

# **St. Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School**

## **A school in the trusteeship of**



Diocese of Westminster



## **EQUALITY POLICY**

**Adopted by governors on: 13 November 2024**

Reviewed for: 2025-26

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aim high and treat everyone with honesty and gentleness.*



## St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to create an educating Christian community which reflects the values of the Gospel within the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church;

- a community which will develop the whole person
- a community which works closely with parents and parish
- a community which values each child as a unique individual with particular gifts and needs
- a forward-looking community which serves its members and the wider society
- a community in which we will lead those in our care to grow in their faith whilst benefiting from an enriching education.

#### **Summary:**

**Following Jesus' footsteps and inspired by St Robert Southwell we work hard, aim high and treat everyone with honesty and gentleness**

### Vision Statement

#### ***Aiming for Excellence – Being The Best We Can Be***

- At School, At Home and in the Community
- Developing children who achieve well, are confident and are happy
- Young people who live their faith positively and contribute to the common good

### Wellbeing & Mental Health Vision

To support everyone's wellbeing and mental health, so that they can be the best they can be, are happy together, resilient, ready to learn and succeed.

- Empowering everyone in the community to be emotionally literate
- Enabling stakeholders to develop strategies to manage their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

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## **EQUALITY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

St Robert Southwell School is committed to the ensuring of equality of opportunities for all members of the school community. The governing board aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, parent or pupil or other members of the school community is treated less favourably than anyone else.

The school holds the fundamental belief that every individual, whatever their colour, culture, gender or ability, should have equal access to the opportunities available in school.

We believe in creating an atmosphere where each member feels equally valued and secure and any behaviour which devalues anyone child for reasons of colour, culture, gender or ability, will create unhappiness and insecurity and will deny this equal access. Such behaviour is therefore unacceptable in this school and will be challenged.

The school is concerned with all pupils' access to the curriculum and the recruitment and opportunities for all staff.

### **Legislation and guidance**

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)



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In common with all public bodies, St. Robert Southwell School will have need to:-

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In practice, due regard means that the governing body and the leadership team will:

- Be aware of the duty to have due regard when making decisions or taking action and will assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policies and take decisions, not as an afterthought but will keep them under review on a continuing basis

It is unlawful to discriminate in the following areas, termed protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To comply with the legislation of the Equality Act 2010
- To continue to maintain the school's position as a provider of the highest quality education and, as a good employer, providing development opportunities for all staff
- To ensure that equality and inclusion remains a focus of the School Improvement Plan
- To establish good management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response
- To ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil
- To ensure that everyone and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of, one another as individuals
- To ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equality policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to relevant procedure.

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Our school aims to promote respect for difference and diversity in accordance with our values, rooted in our mission and vision:

- Following Jesus' footsteps and inspired by St Robert Southwell we work hard, aim high and treat everyone with honesty and gentleness.
- Being the best we can be

As a Voluntary Aided school St Robert Southwell School has certain exceptions to the general code as applied to most schools in England and Wales. These are;

- The Admissions code permits the school to give priority to looked after children who are practising Catholics and other practising Catholic children who live and worship in the parish of St. Sebastian & Pancras providing that the school continues to be oversubscribed
- It is unlawful for us to refuse or accept a pupil, based on the sexual orientation of the parent or parents.

We may apply religious criteria when recruiting any member of the teaching staff. In recruitment, remuneration and promotion, although we seek to appoint the person most suitable for the post, we may give preference to persons:

- Whose religious opinions are in accordance with the Catholic faith
- Who attend religious worship

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents and all stakeholders
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a regular basis to the Headteacher

The equality link governor is Niamh Kennedy. They will:

- Meet with Headteacher and designated staff member twice a year

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The Headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils and other stakeholders
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- The designated member of staff for equality will:
- Support the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality link governor twice a year to raise and discuss any issues
- Support the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

### Curriculum

We seek to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in which skills in all subject areas are taught progressively and systematically. The schools aim is to provide the best possible education for all pupils regardless of gender, ability or ethnic origin. The Curriculum aims to avoid stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. We seek to ensure that the curriculum is not delivered in a discriminatory way. For example:

- Children from all ethnic backgrounds are called upon to express their views in class discussions
- Girls and boys have equal access to all areas of the curriculum including sport
- When curriculum policies are reviewed due regard is given to equal opportunity implications.

### Tracking Pupil Progress

We aim to ensure that all barriers to learning are removed for all our pupils, especially those with protected characteristics. To achieve this, we:

- Track the progress of pupils by analysing data by race, gender, disability, disadvantaged and EAL
- Track the progress of all our pupils by analysing data and outcomes
- Carry out termly assessments of all pupils in mathematics, reading, writing and science and in the seven areas of the EYFS Curriculum.
- Special Issues for some protected characteristics

### Race

The governors will ensure that all pupils are not treated any differently because of their ethnic origins or colour.

### Sexual Orientation

The governors will ensure that children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents are not singled out for unfair treatment.

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### **Disability**

The governors will make all reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantage to a disabled pupil. When considering what a reasonable adjustment is, the governors will take into account the circumstances of each case. Factors which would be considered would include: the financial or other resources required for adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route.

### **Positive Action**

Under the Act, the school can now make New Positive Action provisions to allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. These measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. The school will use these provisions as appropriately as possible to reduce disadvantage and to increase inclusion.

### **Specific Duties**

In order for the school to fulfil its obligations under the Act, it will update the published Policy Annually and publish equality objectives at least once every four years. The objectives will be measurable and focus on improvements and positive outcomes.

### **Equality objectives –see Appendix 2**

### **Recruitment and Employment of Staff**

The governing body will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirement for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

The governing body will consider any possible indirect discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests only if the governing body consider it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristics, for doing so. The governing body will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations and will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability. The school will monitor the ethnic, gender, and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for the jobs (including promotion) and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The governing body will ensure that appropriate training is provided on equal opportunities to all staff likely to be involved in recruitment.

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All staff will assist the governing body and the whole school to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

All staff should be aware that they can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the governing body for any act of unlawful discrimination. If any member of staff considers that they have experienced unlawful discrimination, they may use the school's grievance procedure to make a complaint. The governing body will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds.

### Implementation and Review

The role of the governing body is:

- To ensure the policy is implemented and that it is reviewed annually
- To promote and understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values

The role of the Headteacher is:

- To implement the Policy with support from the governing body
- To ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and that all staff apply it in all situations
- To ensure all appointment panels apply the procedures and principles in this policy, so that everyone is treated equally and fairly
- To ensure that all members of the school community, especially those with protected characteristics, play a full part in all aspects of school life
- To ensure that all complaints about unlawful discrimination are investigated and resolved appropriately

The role of the staff is:

- To always act and behave in a way that is consistent with the aims and objectives of the policy
- To regularly review policies to take account of equal opportunities implications

**All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equality policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.**

### Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

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New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year. The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

### **Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school clubs)
- In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:
  - Analyse the data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
  - Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic bullying)
  - Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

### **Fostering good relations**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute where appropriate
- Working with our local community. This includes organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures

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**Equality considerations in decision-making**

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

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### APPENDIX 1.1

#### PUPIL POPULATION (Autumn 2024)

##### Information on pupils by protected characteristics (see Appendix 1.1)

- The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. Every person has several of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment.

**Disability:** The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

Gender	Number of pupils	Percentage (%) of school population
Male	234	51.88%
Female	217	48.12%

Pupil Special Educational Needs (SEND)		
	Number of pupils	Percentage (%) of school population
No Special Education Need or Disability identified	372	82.48%
EHCP	23	5.10%
School Support	56	12.42%

Ethnicity and Race	Number of pupils	Percentage (%) of school population
White Eastern European	91	20.18
White British	122	27.05
White Irish	34	7.54
White other & other background	56	12.42
Albanian	3	0.66
White Western European	10	12.84
White Italian	4	0.89
Greek Cypriot	2	0.44
Iranian	1	0.22
Portuguese	1	0.22
Traveller of Irish Heritage	5	1.11
Black Caribbean	11	2.44
Black Ghanaian	9	1.99
Black Nigerian	8	1.77
Other black African	8	1.77
Any other black background	5	1.11

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Ethnicity and Race	Number of pupils	Percentage (%) of school population
Any other mixed background	8	1.77
Chinese	2	0.44
Nepalese	3	0.66
Sri Lankan Tamil	3	0.66
Sri Lankan Sinhalese	3	0.66
Pakistani	1	0.22
Bangladeshi	1	0.22
Indian	25	5.54
Other Asian	19	4.21
Refused	16	3.55

### Language table – pupils on roll by their first language

Language	Number of Pupils	Percentage (%) of school population
Albanian/Shqip	1	0.22%
Believed to be English	7	1.55%
English	267	59.20%
French	1	0.22%
Hungarian	2	0.44%
Italian	2	0.44%
Konkani	1	0.22%
Lithuanian	1	0.22%
Nepali	1	0.22%
Believed to be other than English	5	1.11%
Other than English	133	29.49%
Polish	6	1.33%
Romanian	19	4.21%
Spanish	1	0.22%
Tamil	1	0.22%
Yoruba	3	0.67%

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### Information on other groups of pupils

- In addition to pupils with 'protected characteristics', we wish to provide information on the following groups of pupils:

Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)				
	Boys	Girls	Total	Percentage (%) of the school population
Number of pupils who speak English as an additional language	87	109	196	43.46

Pupils from low-income backgrounds				
	Boys	Girls	Total	Percentage (%) of the school population
Number of disadvantaged pupils (Pupil Premium)	19	18	37	8.20

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## **APPENDIX 2**

We have considered the information collected above and have identified the following objectives that our school will focus on this year. These objectives will help us to meet the three arms of the general duties required in the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

### **Our equality objectives are:**

- Increase students understanding and appreciation of cultural, ethnic and social diversity to enable pupils to demonstrate increased awareness and respect for diverse cultures and perspectives through a rich range of experience, both in and beyond the school
- To ensure that all pupils are given similar opportunities with regards to after-school clubs and activities
- To ensure the school environment is accessible as possible to all pupils, staff and visitors
- Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between pupils and all groups of pupils; especially students eligible for free-school meals, students with special educational needs and disabilities and looked after children



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### Equality Objectives for this cycle 2024-25

	Which group(s) with protected characteristics will this benefit/	Actions and who will be involved?	Timescale	Which general duty/ies will it address?	How will we measure our success?
Increase students understanding and appreciation of cultural, ethnic and social diversity to enable pupils to demonstrate increased awareness and respect for diverse cultures and perspectives through a rich range of experience, both in and beyond the school	Gender, Race, Religion or belief,	Programme of visits to include places of worship and larger towns and cities Programme of visitors organised for assemblies to share different faiths and cultures Senior Belonging project	Visit and visitors programme set by Sept. 2027  Termly visitors	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.	Pupils will have a wider experience of a diverse society Children understand that they are part of a multi- faith society and learn the values of other religions  Increase pupils understanding and appreciation of cultural, ethnic and social diversity to enable pupils to demonstrate increased awareness and respect for diverse cultures and perspectives through a rich range of experience, both in and beyond the school

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	<b>Which group(s) with protected characteristics will this benefit/</b>	<b>Actions and who will be involved?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Which general duty/ies will it address?</b>	<b>How will we measure our success?</b>
To ensure that all pupils are given similar opportunities with regards to after-school clubs and activities	Disability, Gender, Race, Religion or belief,	Analysis of register of attendance. Parents and pupil questionnaire. Heads of school, PE co-ordinator	Parent questionnaire – summer term 2025	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not	Increase of attendance to after-school clubs. Monitor club take up by group.
To ensure the school environment is accessible as possible to all pupils, staff and visitors.	Disability, Gender,	Review access to upper floor in main school building Keep accessibility plan up to date (see plan) SENDco, Health and Safety Governors	ongoing	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not	All pupils, staff and visitors able to access learning and environment  Link corridor main new building to new building for access to the lift
	Disability, HI	Ceiling Heights Sound dampening	Summer 2027		Lower ceilings in Reception and Year 1

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	<b>Which group(s) with protected characteristics will this benefit/</b>	<b>Actions and who will be involved?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Which general duty/ies will it address?</b>	<b>How will we measure our success?</b>
Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between pupils; especially between Girls and boys	Disability, Gender, Race,	Target Underachieving groups with support and intervention  Close the gap between boys and girls by accelerating the achievement		Gender	Gap in boys and girls progress closing by KS2
	<b>Monitoring arrangements:</b> Annual data Costings Questionnaire responses Pupil voice Staff voice Case study				

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