

The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust



Equality Policy Statement 2025-2026

Equality Duty - Summary

As public bodies, academies and FE institutions must comply with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. This means you must publish:

- details of how your school complies with the public sector equality duty - you must update this every year
- your school's equality objectives - you must update this at least once every 4 years

The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023 and Advice for Schools provides information as to how your school can demonstrate compliance. For example, including details of how your school is:

- eliminating discrimination
- advancing equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- consulting and involving those affected by inequality, in the decisions your school or college takes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (affected people could include parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community)

How to publish information

It will be up to schools themselves to decide in what format they publish equality information. For most schools, the simplest approach may be to set up an equalities page on their website where all this information is present or links to it are available. The regulations are not prescriptive and it will be entirely up to schools to decide how they publish the information, so long as it is accessible to those members of the school community and the public who want to see it.

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023 requires schools to publish information each year to demonstrate compliance with the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Information about how the School is promoting equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination for pupils, staff and governors with protected characteristics (or other relevant people with protected characteristics in the school community);
- Information relating to employees with protected characteristics

The information published in this document is our response to this. The Public Sector Equality Duty is set out in Section 149 of Equality Act 2010. The 'Duty', as it is known, requires schools & the MAT to pay due regard to the following, when exercising their public functions:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant **protected characteristic** and people who do not share it.

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

You're protected from discrimination:

- at work
- in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

You're legally protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023

You're also protected from discrimination if:

- you're associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend
- you've complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim

What we did during the last year

Within our trust, we take full account of equality and accessibility in our day-to-day policy, decision-making and practice. Where necessary, we put actions in place to address any barriers faced by pupils, parents or governors with protected characteristics.

For example, this includes:

- Analysing outcomes for pupils by characteristics and planning interventions for groups with lower outcomes
- Reporting to the LGCs and trustees on PSED actions and progress and reflecting these within School self-evaluation
- Reviewing any complaints/incidents of bullying specifically related to age, race, religion, gender or sexuality

We are working hard to be a good employer of people with protected characteristics.

For example, this includes:

- Analysing pay in light of Gender and pay progression for teachers with regard to protected characteristics (where known). *Please see the annual Gender Pay Gap Report.*
- Working towards better pay equality for all staff
- Encouraging all groups to apply for secondments and promotions where available
- Being flexible and responsive to requests from staff where applicable
- Monitoring well-being across our schools and supporting staff wellbeing activities

Looking ahead – what next

Over the course of the year ahead, we will continue to deliver our equality objectives via our trust's standard 'Improvement and Development Plan'. The general principles that underpin these objectives include:

- All students to reach their potential
- Promote a diverse work force through review of recruitment processes
- Promote fair access to appropriate development opportunities for all staff
- Seek the views of members of our school/trust communities (students, parents, staff and our wider community) in order to inform the school's ongoing planning and review process
- Support vulnerable pupils back into school where applicable
- Maintain a sharp focus on narrowing the 'gap' between disadvantaged pupils and others and improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils (incl. SEN)
- Ensure students and families have access and support from a wide range of responsive services at point of need. ('signposting')
- An inclusive school with high standards of behaviour and low exclusions
- Make a strong contribution to addressing issues of inequality and prejudice, e.g. by directly challenging racism or other issues of intolerance, with the strategy to take action underpinned by our Catholic ethos