



St Bede's

Catholic School
& Sixth Form College

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY INFORMATION & OBJECTIVES

Governing Body Approval : Full Governing Body	
Name: M Gray (Chair)	 Signature:
Date:	29 September 2022
Review Date	Information September 2023 Objectives September 2026

The Governors' policy on Equality and Diversity reflects the school's legal obligation and duty to devise Equality Schemes for Disability, Race and Gender.



The School & Context

St Bede's is an oversubscribed 11-19 Voluntary Aided Catholic Comprehensive School with 1,394 students. In the setting of the rural district of Derwentside, NW County Durham, our students come from a range of social and economic backgrounds, set in a challenging environment of small communities that are still working to regenerate after the decline of the coal and steel industries.

The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is rising but lower than national average at 15% and 5% of the school population speak English as an additional language, (September 2022).

We provide an increasingly diverse curriculum which both addresses basic skills and challenges the breadth of learner abilities.

The school is committed to the principle of "inclusion". It is adapted for physically disabled students, staff, parents and visitors and attracts an increasing percentage of students from ethnic minority groups.

The following statistics have been extracted as at September 2022.

49% of the student population are female and 51% are male

64% of the school staff are female and 36% are male

2% of students in Years 7-11 have an EHC Plan or transferrable statements of SEN

No members of staff are registered as physically disabled whilst others are protected by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. 9% of the school population come from minority ethnic groups

5% of the school population speak English as an additional language

2% of the school's staff come from minority ethnic groups





The Gospels of Christ contain the values upon which St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College is founded;

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College is to create an atmosphere of Catholic values, attitudes, practice and knowledge such that all children will have the opportunity for their faith to be nurtured. Thus they will be able to widen and deepen themselves as people in preparation for this life and for the life to come.

St Bede's Aims and Values

St Bede's aims to be a community inspired by **CHRIST** to serve others.

Common Good

To promote a spirit of **charity**, social **justice**, global **stewardship** and concern for others leading to a contribution to the common good.

Hope

To be an educational community built on foundations of **faith**, **hope** and **love**, which reflects Christ's message of **compassion**, **solidarity** and **forgiveness**.

Respect

To build a community of mutual **respect** working towards a common understanding of high standards of behaviour, good **manners** and individual accountability, as well as encouraging students to make **responsible** and positive **choices**.

Inspiration

To be a caring, supportive and inclusive community inspired by **Christ**, recognised by our love of God and of our **neighbour** whilst nurturing qualities of **resilience**, **determination**, **ambition**, **courage** and commitment, in order to live fulfilling and purposeful lives.

Service

To follow Christ's example of **serving** others, in a climate of **kindness**, **humility**, **friendship** and **cooperation**.



Talents

To encourage all members of the community to foster a love of life-long learning so that they can use their **talents** to the full, pursuing **excellence** in all things and in doing so, bring Christ to each other.

Principles

Every child with his/her individual needs and gifts is a unique gift from God.

“All human beings are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God’s image there is here a basic equality between all people and it must be given ever greater recognition.... forms of social or cultural discrimination.... on the grounds of sex, race colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed as incompatible with God’s design.”

Gaudium et Spes 29.

St Bede’s Catholic School & 6th Form College has a long-standing commitment to equality of opportunity. This commitment is confirmed in a number of pre-existing policies including (*the Special Needs Policy Statement, the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Curriculum Policy and the Management of Behaviour Policy*). Where equality of opportunity exists, all staff and learners work in a more rewarding and less stressful environment, one free from prejudice and harassment and one more likely to enhance their performance and achievement.

All members of staff and governors accept responsibility for ‘socially disadvantaged’ pupils and are committed to meeting their pastoral, social and academic needs within a caring Catholic environment. This is an essential, integral part of the spiritual development of the whole school community.

As with every child in our care, a child who is considered to be ‘socially disadvantaged’ is valued, respected and entitled to develop to his/her full potential, irrespective of need.

St Bede’s School is a welcoming, friendly and inclusive school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We seek to be a community that places learning at the centre of all its activities and a school that offers achievement, success and recognition of worth to all its members. We are a school that provides students with an awareness of the global dimension and a respect for other cultures. St Bede’s is a school that fosters integrity, fairness and respect.

We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate

curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximize their potential regardless of age, gender, race, colour, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

At St Bede's School we aim to promote and indeed celebrate equality and diversity and tackle any form of discrimination. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, attainment and achievement. We will promote community cohesion at school, national and global levels and implement all necessary actions in relation to ethnicity, religion or belief, and socioeconomic background.

The purpose of the Policy and Guidelines is to:

- Support the Catholic ethos of the school and create a climate for school improvement, enabling all pupils and staff to give of their best;
- Enable the School Governing Body to respond to legislation and best practice guidance in the field of equality and opportunity;
- Ensure that the School Governing Body's Policy supports the School's Mission Statement; and
- Provided a clear framework for action in relation to equality of opportunity over the coming years.

The Governing Body of St Bede's Catholic School & 6th Form College is committed to ensuring that all aspects of school life, including admission, curriculum, and staffing are dealt with in a fair and just manner. Governors believe that the principle of equal opportunity in all things is consistent with social justice and best educational and personnel practice; it is in keeping with our Catholic aim to recognise the dignity and worth of all people. To this end we aim to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the Law.

To meet its duties in respect of Equality Schemes for Disability, Race and Gender, the school will aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our students can flourish
 - If required, eliminate unlawful gender discrimination and harassment;
 - if required, eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
 - promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
 - encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
 - prepare students for participation in Britain's multi-ethnic, diverse society;
 - help all students develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change;
 - acknowledge the existence of racism and take steps to prevent it;
 - oppose all forms of racism, xenophobia, racial prejudice and racial harassment;
 - ensure that pupils will not be denied fair and equal treatment because of their sexuality or gender.
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- work with parents and the wider school community to promote equality of opportunity for all.
- create an environment in which all staff and pupils, whatever their sexuality or gender assignment, feel equally welcome and valued, and in which homophobic behaviour is not tolerated.

To achieve these aims we will:

- publish and share our policy with the school and wider community;
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage;
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrate respect to others.



Admissions

In common with other Catholic schools in England, St Bede's Catholic School & 6th Form College was founded to serve the local community, predominantly by providing education for the children of Catholic families. The school thus has a duty to give preference in admission to Catholic children. The Governing Body follows its admissions arrangements carefully and does not discriminate in terms of race, sex, colour or disability.

Curriculum

All pupils are entitled to equal access to the full curriculum, recognising the importance of differentiating that curriculum in order to meet children's individual needs. The school staff and governors strive to be constantly aware that their own expectations can affect children's achievement, behaviour and status.

Personnel

The Governing Body's selection processes aim to select the best applicants assessed against professional criteria for the post. The school acknowledges its commitment to conducting our affairs in accordance with equal opportunities legislation. When drawing-up or applying selection criteria, the governors do not discriminate on grounds of age, gender, race colour, nationality, ethnic origin or disability. Staff will not be excluded from employment or promotion because of their sexuality or gender. This school/college values all its pupils and staff equally, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender assignment.

Catholic schools have, as part of their character, a duty to provide Religious Education and a requirement that those schools be conducted in accordance



with the rites, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic faith. It would therefore be clear that where applicants are equal in qualifications and experience in the context of selection criteria for a teaching post, that a Catholic applicant would have an advantage over applicants not of Catholic faith in compliance with the Diocesan Policy in being able to contribute to the mission of the Church in Catholic education. The posts of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, and Head of Religious Education are reserved for practising Catholics.

In fulfilling the objectives of Catholic schools, governors must have regard to matters which are particularly significant in the light of the sacramental teachings of the Church. Catholic teachers by their example and practice are witnesses to the Gospels and to the Church's teachings.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Data will be used to monitor the attainment and progress of students by gender, special educational need, free school meals (FSM), Pupil Premium and ethnic group;

The results of review and evaluation procedures will inform planning, target setting and school improvement objectives.

The School Governing Body's Definition of Equality and Opportunity:

On 5 April 2011, the public sector equality duty (the equality duty) came into force. The equality duty was created under the Equality Act 2010.

The equality duty replaced the race, disability and gender equality duties. The equality duty was developed in order to harmonise the equality duties and to extend it across the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.



Equality of opportunity requires that everyone has an equal chance to develop themselves to their full potential. Consequently, equality of opportunity implies that:

- Equality of access exists for all;
- Individual choices are widened and everyone is treated fairly and with respect.
- Everyone is unique and has different needs and will be provided with a differentiated provision to meet those needs (equality of opportunity is underpinned by the idea of equality implies not sameness of service but diversity to meet diverse needs);
- No one experiences disadvantage or discrimination;
- Bullying and harassment, in any form, will not be tolerated;
- Change is managed for the benefit of all;
- Individuals and groups are allocated appropriate levels of support to ensure that their potential is fulfilled.

In relation to its more restricted role in the curriculum the School Governing Body defines equality of opportunity as a cross-curriculum dimension, which should be woven through the life, and work of the school, enlighten every area of the curriculum and be addressed by everyone who works within the school on a paid or voluntary basis.

Entitlement and Responsibilities

All learners and staff are entitled to work in an environment that meets their individual needs and develops them to their full potential does not unfairly discriminate against them in any shape or form.

All learners are entitled to full access to a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects, values and celebrates diversity within society locally, regionally and nationally.

All learners and staff are entitled to be treated equitably and with respect irrespective of their gender, ability or sexual orientation, the social, cultural or religious background, or their family circumstances or age.

All learners and staff are entitled to work in an environment in which they do not encounter bullying or harassment in any shape or form.

All those associated in any shape or form with the school are entitled to equality of opportunity as defined in the Policy and Guidelines, and they should have responsibility for its successful implementation.

Guidelines:



The Curriculum

The Governing Body of St Bede's Catholic School & 6th Form College believe as Christians that equality of opportunity should permeate all aspects of the curriculum and be promoted by all who work and learn in the school. There is no subject or programme of study that cannot be approached in a manner sympathetic to the aims of equality of opportunity. Consequently, the School Governing Body will ensure that a curriculum impact assessment is undertaken by December of each year which:

- Ensures that all pupils have access to the same broad and balanced curriculum and which is appropriately differentiated to meet individual needs and aspirations;
- Ensures that pupils with an EHC Plan, naming the school are welcomed into the community.
- Ensures that equality of opportunity is taught as a cross-curriculum dimension;
- Examines schemes of work and curriculum guidelines to ensure that full advantage is taken of the National Curriculum and Religious Education to promote equality of opportunity;
- Ensures the equality of opportunity is taught as a cross-curriculum dimension;
- Ensures that the curriculum reflects the diversity of the school community, and of society, locally, regionally and nationally;
- Ensures that teaching resources reflect the diversity of society locally, and nationally;
- Ensures that teaching resources portray members of all groups, and particularly those groups most likely to encounter disadvantage and discrimination, in ways which are positive and non-stereotypical, especially in teaching groups which do not contain members of such groups;
- Considers the benefits of grouping pupils and students by gender and/or religion when particular activities are undertaken (e.g. physical education of swimming) or when particular topics are addressed (e.g. sex education); and
- Identifies how daily acts of collective worship can contribute to equality of opportunity.

Whole School Issues

The School Governing Body believes that pupils learn from the informal as well as from the formal curriculum. Consequently, it will ensure that;

- Equality of access exists for all pupils and staff;
 - The aims, objectives and implications of inclusion are understood by all Pupils, staff, parents and primary carers;
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- The school respects any dress code which is formally required by pupils' faith traditions.
- Accurate information for the sole purpose of monitoring equal opportunities is kept about the ethnic origin, first language, religious affiliation and special needs of all pupils;
- Assessment procedures do not disadvantage any group of pupils;
- Assessment procedures are adequately resourced to take account of the specific needs of minority ethnic pupils, and of pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties;
- Underachieving pupils are given support and encouragement required to enhance their performance without the performance of other pupils being affected detrimentally;
- Gifted and talented pupils are given support and encouragement required to enhance their performance without the performance of other pupils being affected detrimentally;
- Strategies are put in place to motivate and reintegrate disaffected pupils;
- Reliable and effective means exist to inform all parents and primary carers of their children's progress;
- Community languages other than English are valued and encouraged;
- All pupils are given opportunities to meet their religious needs, especially when important festivals occur;
- Specific dietary needs of pupils are respected;
- Members of all groups are welcomed and valued;
- Members of all groups are encouraged to play an active role in school affairs, perhaps making a contribution towards the governance of the school;
- As far as possible, staffing reflects the diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally, and
- All incidents of bullying and harassment are dealt with in an effective and consistent manner and complies with reporting legislation.

Disability Equality and Accessibility Plan

Definition of disability

A disabled person (child or adult) is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments; impairments relating to mental functioning, including learning disabilities; and long term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.



- Substantial means more than minor or trivial.
- Long-term means an impairment that has lasted at least 12 months or is likely to last 12 months or for the rest of the person's life.
- Normal day-to-day activities cover the following categories: mobility; manual dexterity; physical coordination; continence; ability to lift carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; perception of the risk of physical danger.

Someone with impairment may be receiving medical or other treatment which alleviates or removes the effects of that impairment (but not the impairment itself). In such cases the treatment should be disregarded and the impairment is taken to have the effect it would have had without the treatment. Some people are automatically deemed to have a disability covered by the Act – those with HIV, cancer, MS, and severe disfigurements. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

Provisions relating to disability

The disability provisions in the Equality Act 2010 mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). There are some minor differences as follows:

Unlike the DDA the Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must demonstrate that they cannot carry out, thus making the definition of disability less restrictive for disabled people to meet.

Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified. The fact that it must be *reasonable* provides the necessary test.

Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be defended as justified – bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally.

From September 2012, schools and local authorities have a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through Special Educational Needs (SEN) statements or from other sources. In practice this will already be being done in many cases.

Equality Act - Definition of disability

The Equality Act 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.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.



Unlawful behaviour with regard to disabled pupils

Direct Discrimination: A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled – for example by having an admission bar on disabled applicants.

A change for schools in this Act is that there can no longer be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. Under the DDA schools could justify some direct discrimination – if was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. What the change means is that if a school discriminates against a person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

Indirect Discrimination: A school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only – for example having a rule that all pupils must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school – unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability: A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability – for example by not allowing a disabled pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for her to get out and back. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

Harassment: A school must not harass a pupil because of his disability – for example, a teacher shouting at the pupil because the disability means that he is constantly struggling with class-work or unable to concentrate.

Disability Equality Duty – schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act, this has been replaced by the general equality duty and the new specific duties – covered in chapter 5 of this guidance.

Reasonable adjustments and when they have to be made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.

Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.



Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

Achievements:

A detailed analysis of outcome data for disabled students will focus on:

- exams;
- accredited learning;
- end of key stage outcomes;
- achievements in extra curricular activities; and
- broader outcomes such as those set out in Every Child Matters.

In addition, staff will consider the reasonable adjustments required to involve all students in educational trips and visits with appropriate risk assessments.

Eliminating discrimination and harassment

The following actions are planned:

- Training opportunities for teaching assistants and other staff in meeting the needs of students with SEND and general learning difficulties;
- Information on all students with disabilities to be made available digitally and securely for staff;
- awareness raising of disability-related harassment through assemblies and SMSC /PSHE programmes;
- review of anti-bullying policy

Promoting positive attitudes

We will seek to promote positive attitudes to disability in a number of ways including:

- staff modelling respectful attitudes to disabled students, staff and parents;
- representation of disabled people in positions of responsibility in the school; and
- ensuring there are positive images of disability in school books and other materials.

Racial Equality

The school currently draws its students from a mixed catchment area and has a genuinely comprehensive intake.



Aims and Values

Our commitment to promoting racial equality and cultural diversity is encapsulated in the aims of the school.

In addition we aim:

- To respect and value the differences between people.
- To prepare students for participation in Britain's multi-ethnic, diverse society.
- To make the school a place where everyone, taking account of race, colour, language, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender or sexuality feels welcomed and valued and feels a sense of collective and community identity.
- To help students develop a sense of personal and cultural identity.
- To promote good relations between different racial, cultural and religious groups within the school and within the wider community.
- To acknowledge the existence of racism and takes steps to prevent it.
- To oppose all forms of racism, xenophobia, racial prejudice and racial harassment.
- To be proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our commitment to racial equality and cultural diversity involves all members of the school community – students, staff, parents/carers, governors and visitors, and applies to all areas of school life.

Commitments

We are committed to:

- Actively tackling racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity.
- Promoting positive approaches to diversity.
- Involving students, parents/carers, staff and governors in developing policies, procedures and practices which promote inclusion.
- Monitoring teaching and curriculum development to ensure high expectations of all students
- Encouraging and supporting all students and staff to achieve their best.



Published Equality Information about the context of our school relating to protected characteristics 2022-23

This is our published data about our school population and differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics.

School data broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender, and EAL:

The school roll current numbers:

Year 7	237
Year 8	254
Year 9	246
Year 10	239
Year 11	247
Year 12	90
Year 13	81

We presently have 681 girls and 713 boys.



5% students are from minority ethnic (ME)/English as an Additional Language (EAL). There are no current trends in underachievement for these students.

We have 239 students classified as disadvantaged students (including Sixth Form) in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium Grant. 2016/17 whole school VA gap for disadvantaged/non disadvantaged students narrowed.

	No.	Boys	Girls
Year 7	43	24	19
Year 8	56	29	27
Year 9	62	32	30
Year 10	46	23	23
Year 11	32	17	15

School data broken down by types of impairment and special educational need:

13% of our students are on the SEN register, and our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils (see SEN Policy on the website). Our SENCO oversees this provision. Learning Support Assistants also deliver targeted interventions to this group.

Provision is in place for all SEN students. We monitor the impact of this provision on attainment.

The SEN Learners are broken down as follows:

Autistic Spectrum Disorder	37
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties	44
Visually Impaired	7
Hearing Impaired	7
Moderate Learning Difficulties	46
Physical Disability	4
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	6
Specific Learning Difficulty	29
Other	7

The school's SEND Policy, Behaviour Policy, Teaching and Learning and our student support interventions support our SEN students and other vulnerable groups. We work hard to develop strategies to engage in these students in lesson time to aid their progress.

The school is an accessible building, with ramps, accessibly toilets and wheelchair accessible routes.

There is a current accessibility plan and equality objectives are in place.



The school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support SEN students.

In the light of the makeup of our school, our Equality and Diversity objectives for September 2021 are:

- To ensure a minimal gap in achievement between boys and girls.
- To work to meet the needs of young people around the issue of gender identity so that they feel fully supported and valued in school.
- To support those young people with social, emotional and mental health issues, both with their studies and through their experience of school life

