



Oratory R.C. Primary and Nursery School



**'Shine as to be a light
to others'**

Equal Opportunities Policy (Incorporating Accessibility Policy)

Date of this Policy:	Reviewed by:	Date to be ratified by FGB	Date for next review:	Date to be next ratified by FGB:	Review Frequency
January 2022	Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Premises Committee.	January 2022	December 2024	January 2024	2-3 years or when required
How will Governors assure the Oratory community that this policy is being implemented:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing Monitoring Visits to school • Termly Safeguarding Report to Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Premises Committee. • Pupil Conferencing • Reports / observations from visitors to the school 			

Mission Statement

‘Shine as to be a light to others’

Saint John Henry Newman

Our School’s Mission

At the Oratory R.C. Primary and Nursery School every aspect of school life is founded on Gospel Values. Our choice of Mission Statement, “Shine as to be a light to others”, is inspired by the writing and teaching of Saint John Henry Newman, an advocate of personalised learning, and of Saint Philip Neri, who believed that “cheerfulness strengthens the heart and makes us persevere in a good life; therefore the servant of God ought always to be in good spirits.”

We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and happy immersive learning environment, based upon the living tradition of the Church, drawing continually upon current educational research.

Our School prepares children to meet the opportunities and challenges of life in contemporary Britain and within a fast changing technological and globalised world through an innovative curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of all.

A community of lifelong learners, our School and Governing body and trustees work in close partnership with: our families, the Fathers and Brothers of the Oratory, our local parish, the local and wider community, and external consultants. We work together to enable all to fulfill their spiritual, academic, emotional and social potential. We are a team, and together we make a difference.

Our School’s Vision

Christ is at the centre of all we do.

Our School is a learning community for all: pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers, outside agencies, and the local and wider community.

Ours is a strong culture of unconditional support for one another’s learning, where all listen respectfully and welcome constructive criticism and challenge.

We offer a vibrant and exciting curriculum and learning experience, ensuring that all pupils, from whatever point they start on entering our School, make at least good progress.

We aim to help our children discover and develop their God-given talents and to encourage them to grow in responsibility for themselves and for others.

We believe that everyone has a right to equal access and opportunity, and equal freedom to work and learn, and freedom from unjust discrimination and from prejudice.

Our practices promote the right of all to participate in school life by actively promoting equality and social inclusion without distinction of culture, religion, language, ethnic background or race.

Our School's context and culture

Our School mission is based on the belief that every human being is a unique person created in the image and likeness of God, with a God-given potential for growth and an eternal destiny in heaven. Our staff have a special vocation to make sure that all our children receive the very best educational experience in order to grow in the love and knowledge of God, their neighbour, themselves and the created world.¹ We see this as integral to our Catholic ethos.

As a school we work together to embed and sustain this ethos. The word "ethos" can be defined as: "a way of living, behaving and doing things by people who, though diverse, follow common values and are linked by a shared vision of life."⁵ Our School's Catholic ethos promotes and helps to shape a strong set of values.

Definition

The Equal Opportunities Policy within our school is based on the recognition that all human beings are created in God's image and are of equal value regardless of culture, race gender, creed, sexual orientation, ability, physical impairment or social background. It is about recognizing differences, meeting individual needs and taking positive action so that each child has equal access to the educational opportunities offered by our school.

Aims

- To ensure maximum possible access to the school curriculum for all.
- To ensure that statutory requirements are met in offering equal opportunity to:
 - children seeking admission to the school
 - existing pupils
 - job applicants
 - existing members of staff
- To enable the recognition that stereotyping of all kinds restricts development, limits expectation and closes options.
- To maintain means of assessment that reflects individual pupils' needs regardless of race, gender, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, creed or disability.
- To plan and monitor practice in order to ensure all pupils have access to appropriate equipment and resources.
- To enable all children to reach their full potential and to ensure that they remain healthy, safe and are able to realise their full potential.

Practice

- We acknowledge and respect pupils' cultural backgrounds
- We follow Birmingham Diocesan policies and procedures concerning the Catholic Life of the School, the participation of pupils in collective worship and Religious Education.
- Through our Behaviour Policy, we promote positive attitudes and respectful behaviour towards all other pupils, staff and visitors in the school. Sexist, racist and homophobic comments or behaviours are not tolerated and procedures in both LA and school policies for dealing with such behaviour are actively pursued.
- We provide opportunities for equal access across the curriculum regardless of gender, race, disability, colour, and nationality, ethnic or national origin. Where necessary, additional support is provided.
- Through PSHE and its application in the wider school curriculum, all pupils are encouraged to develop their self-esteem, self-respect, resilience, resourcefulness, reflection skills, confidence, and are given opportunities to express personal opinions and risk take.
- We operate mixed ability and gender groups across the spread of school activities
- The school will make all reasonable effort to ensure that meetings are accessible and convenient for all and take into account particular needs and requirements, e.g. physical access, child care and interpreter support.
- The school does not discriminate in relation to recruitment, employment and vocational training on the grounds of gender, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins or disability,

This policy should be viewed alongside the School Accessibility Plan and the School SEND Offer and Report as well as the following policies - Inclusion, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Staff Code of Conduct and Anti Bullying.

Racial Equality

In our school we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures. All staff endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school. Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups.

Disability Non-discrimination

Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non-disabled children.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children and adults full access to the school premises and to all areas of learning. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, ensure access, modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities if children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

Oratory RC Primary School and Nursery has an Accessibility Plan which is reviewed on an annual basis. We are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. Oratory RC Primary School and Nursery plans, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.

The Role of the Class Teacher

Class teachers recognise the possibility of their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls. All staff ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history. In geography, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents and draw them to the immediate attention of the Head Teacher.

The Role of the Head Teacher

It is the Head Teacher's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against;
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff;
- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in school assemblies, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school. Respect is a key part of our Christian values.
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due seriousness, and in line with this policy.

The Role of Governors

In this policy statement, the governing body and trustees have set out their commitment to equal opportunities and accessibility, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The governing body and trustees collect, analyse and evaluate a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parent, carer and pupil questionnaires.

The governing body and trustees seek to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 (see section 1.2 above) are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or minority group a child may come from. The governors take all

reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities. The governing body and trustees ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their gender, religion or race.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body and trustees to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the Head Teacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's Behaviour Policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body and trustees every three years or sooner if it is considered necessary.

This Accessibility part of this policy and the accessibility plan are drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

We are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

Oratory RC Primary School and Nursery plans, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school. An Accessibility plan will be drawn up to cover a three year period. The plan will be updated annually.

The Accessibility plan will contain relevant actions to:

1. Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school for pupils, staff, parents and visitors, and provision of physical aids to access education.
2. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of the Equalities Act 2010). This covers teaching and learning as well as access to the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist

aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. Improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

The Action plan for accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which is undertaken regularly. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of any one Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

This Accessibility Policy and its associated plan will be published on the school's website.

The school's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility plan.

The Accessibility policy and associated Accessibility Plan will be approved by full Governing body and trustees and monitored by the relevant committees on an annual basis The Plan will be monitored by Ofsted as part of their inspection cycle.

We acknowledge that there is a need for on-going awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. This will form part of each Accessibility Plan.