

**St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School**  
**Gender Equality Scheme**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**“At St Bernadette’s Catholic School you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.”**

**BACKGROUND**

St Bernadette's is a large Catholic primary school that is located in a socially deprived part of Birmingham. The school is founded on Catholic principles and 70% of its pupils are baptised Catholics. Most pupils are of White British origin. Around 17% are of Asian background and a small number, about 5% of Black and 7.5% mixed heritage. In the past few years, a number of Polish pupils, around 3% of the school's population, have been admitted. On entry, all are beginners in English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average. The percentage claiming free school meals is well above average at 36.6%.

**RATIONALE**

At St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary school we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability

This scheme sets out our commitment to promoting equality and eliminating sexual discrimination and harassment.

We will make this gender equality scheme widely available both within the school community and in the wider community so that all Governors, staff, pupils and parents are aware of it and its contents. We will do this by:

- Formally adopting the policy at a Governing body meeting and recording this in the minutes
- Distributing copies of the scheme to all members of staff
- Discussing the scheme with pupils and making sure they know what it means
- Sending copies home to parents
- Having a copy of the scheme available on the school website

**CONTEXT**

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act to place a statutory duty upon schools when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

In order to meet this statutory duty schools have “specific duties” to:

- **Prepare and publish a gender equality scheme**, showing how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- **Consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap** in formulating its overall objectives.

- **Gather and use information** on how the school's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.
- **Consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information** in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- **Assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices** on gender equality.
- **Implement the actions set out in its scheme** within three years.
- **Report** against the scheme every year and **review** the scheme at least every three years.

This scheme outlines how we will fulfil this duty, including a set of specific measurable targets set out in a 3 year action plan. (See Appendix 1)

### **AIMS**

We recognise that schools play a key role in shaping the values and attitudes of children and that we should take a lead in challenging gender stereotypes, as well as gender-based harassment and bullying. Schools also need to be at the forefront of promoting gender equality in terms of outcomes for pupils.

Our core values are built around providing a secure, collaborative and purposeful learning culture, where all pupils and staff are valued, cared for, listened to and challenged to be the best they can be. We are therefore equally ambitious for all our pupils and staff. Our response to the individual needs of all our stakeholders is a vital part of personalising learning for all.

The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement reminds us that all teachers are required to follow three inclusive principles:

- Setting suitable learning challenges, enabling all children to experience success and achieve as high a standard as possible through appropriate differentiation.
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs by:
  - creating effective learning environments;
  - securing their motivation and concentration;
  - providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches;
  - using appropriate assessment approaches;
  - setting targets for learning.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

These principles underpin our Gender Equality Scheme and inform our objectives.

The school aims to work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. We will do this by:

- Treating all those within the school community (e.g. pupils, staff, governors, parents and the community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experience
- Creating and maintaining a school ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices
- Encouraging everyone in our school community to gain a positive self image and high self esteem
- Having high expectations of everyone involved with the whole school community
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly and honestly
- Identifying, challenging and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replacing them with practices that are fair to all

- Monitoring evaluating and reviewing all the above to secure continuous improvement in all that we do.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This gender equality scheme links to other specific policies and action plans that the school produces including the School Development Plan.

This gender equality scheme outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school so that each person knows what is expected of them. **Promoting gender equality and raising the achievement of all pupils is the responsibility of the whole school staff.**

Introduction to this gender equality scheme will be included in induction arrangements for all staff new to the school. School induction procedures will highlight duties implied by this policy in the same way as child protection, health and safety and behaviour policies form part of the induction process.

### **Head teacher and Leadership Team**

The Head teacher and Leadership Team will demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this scheme. They will ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their role and responsibilities in relation to it. The Head teacher will assess and monitor the impact of the scheme and will report outcomes to the governing body annually. Where additional funding is available for raising the achievement of specific groups of pupils, the Head teacher will ensure that the additional resources are used appropriately and targeted on the basis of identified need and that outcomes are monitored.

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body has agreed this scheme and will assess and monitor the impact of the policy annually. One member of the Governing body will have specific responsibility for monitoring this policy, acting as the designated governor for equality.

### **Staff**

All staff will familiarise themselves with this scheme and know what their responsibilities are in ensuring that it is implemented. Teachers will know the implications of the scheme for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for behavioural issues.

### **Pupils**

Pupils will be made aware of how the gender equality scheme applies to them. They will learn to treat each other with respect and have the confidence to report incidents of harassment to adults.

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers will share in the development of the gender equality scheme and be encouraged to participate fully in implementing it within the school particularly by reinforcing its ethos at home. They will be invited to comment on the scheme and will be regularly updated on progress

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The Governing Body will consider all applications for posts at the school regardless of gender or race and decisions will be made on merit alone.

The Governing Body is committed to equal pay alongside equal responsibilities for staff and therefore this is not an issue for the school. It is also committed to ensuring equality of opportunity where promotion or career development is concerned.

School titles will avoid gender reference e.g. Head teacher, Faculty Leader and Chair of Governors etc.

## **TRAINING**

All staff and Governors will receive training on the gender equality scheme and their responsibilities under it. All new staff and Governors will have the policy explained to them as part of induction arrangements. Following revision of the scheme changes will be communicated to all staff and “refresher” training will be arranged as necessary. All pupils will be given an overview of the scheme following its formal adoption and their responsibilities.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The school will monitor the impact of this scheme on pupils, parents and staff. In particular, we will monitor the impact of our policies on the attainment levels of our pupils.

To monitor our pupils’ attainment we will collect information about pupils’ performance and progress, analyse it and use it to examine trends. To help interpret this information we will monitor other areas that could have an adverse impact on pupils’ attainment such as:

- Exclusion
- Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs) and provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils
- Punishment and reward
- Membership of the governing body
- Parental involvement
- Working with the community
- Support advice and guidance

Monitoring information will help us to see what progress we are making towards meeting our gender equality targets and aims. In particular it will help us to:

- Highlight any difference between pupils
- Ask why these differences exist and test explanations given
- Review the effectiveness of current targets and objectives
- Decide what further action will be necessary to meet particular needs and to improve the performance of pupils (which might include positive action)
- Rethink and set targets in relevant strategic plans
- Links will be made with Performance Management objectives which will include qualitative information as well as quantitative data
- Take action to make improvements

## **ASSESSING IMPACT**

We will use Birmingham Local Authority’s guidelines to assess and monitor the impact of new or significantly amended policies on all our pupils, parents and members of staff. The results of these assessments will be submitted to Governors and will be available to parents and pupils on request.

We will continue to assess the effectiveness of our existing policies through existing arrangements for developing and reviewing other school policies. The main questions for assessing the impact of **all** our school’s policies – giving special attention to pupils’ attainment levels – will include the following:

- Do we help all our pupils to achieve as much as they can, and get the most from what is on offer, based on their individual needs?
- Which groups of pupils are not achieving as much as they can? Why not?
- How do we explain any differences? Are the explanations justified?

- Does each relevant policy include aims to deal with pupil attainment differences between male and female pupils? Do our policy aims lead to action to deal with differences that have been identified (for example, extra coaching for pupils, or steps to prevent bullying)?
- What are we doing to raise standards and promote equality of opportunity for pupils who seem to be underachieving and who may need extra support?
- Can any action we take be traced back to individual policy aims and related targets and strategies?
- Is the action taken appropriate and effective? Are there any unexpected results? If so how are they being handled?
- Does each relevant policy include aims to promote equality and harmony, prevent or challenge discrimination?
- Does each relevant policy's aims lead to effective action?
- What changes does the school need to make to relevant policies, their aims and any related targets and strategies?

To answer these questions we will consider the following:

- Collecting and analysing relevant monitoring and other data
- Talking to parents, pupils and staff to find out their needs and opinions
- Carrying out surveys or special research

We will use the results of these assessments to:

- Rethink our equality aims, targets and strategies
- Influence and guide their planning and decision making

### **COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

At St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School every stakeholder has equal opportunity to make complaints which will be followed up by the appropriate body. As part of the ethos of the school we celebrate pupils' achievements regardless of ability, gender, age or race and provide opportunities for staff and children to voice their opinion on inclusion issues.

At St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary there are a variety of opportunities for stakeholders to express views in a suggestion box, home-school booklets, focus groups and in questionnaires. All outcomes that need addressing will be reported to the Governing Body.

### **BREACH OF THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME**

We will ensure that all Governors, staff pupils and parents are fully aware of the content of the scheme and their responsibilities under it. Any action that constitutes or could be deemed to constitute a breach of the policy/scheme will be viewed seriously, investigated fully and could lead to action taken against those responsible.

***Date agreed by the Governing Body:***

***Signed: (Chair of the Governing Body)***

**Appendix 1. St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan (2011-2014)**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
<b>Involving stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange questionnaires and consultation meetings with stakeholders to ensure their views are understood and incorporated</li> </ul>			Leadership team	Leadership team and governors
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	Policies to be reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour</li> <li>• PE</li> <li>• CPD</li> <li>• Equal Opps inc. Race and Disability Equality</li> <li>• Sex and Relationships Education</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Healthy Schools</li> </ul>	2011 -14 (rolling programme of review)	Committee meeting of Governors	Governors	Leadership team and governors
<b>Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report from faculty heads/subject leaders and teachers on underperformance of groups.</li> <li>• Review of environment and curriculum resources, fiction and library resources to ensure they model genders in a positive non-stereotypical way.</li> </ul>		None contact time for staff	Faculty heads/subject leaders	Leadership team and governors
<b>Enjoyment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of extended services and extracurricular activities, to include a pupil survey</li> <li>• Discussions with pupils about behaviour, uniform, sports, clubs, lessons, toilets, responsibilities and expectations and whether gender is an issue.</li> <li>• Investigate whether: Boys are fully involved with dance/drama. Girls are fully involved with team sports. Children are not "opting out" through lack of kit or effort and involvement</li> </ul>	Physical health day Monitoring will take place regularly throughout the term	PE co-ordinator	Head  Class teacher	Leadership team reports back to head to identify key areas to develop
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review procurement practice to ensure compliance with Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act.</li> </ul>			Head	Governors
<b>Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Recruitment &amp; Selection policy and practice for gender bias, including person specifications, flexibility regarding job sharing and part-time working etc.</li> </ul>		Training for all those involved in recruitment and selection.	Head	Report to governing body and leadership team
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned lesson observations to include looking at gender issues and achievement of target groups, including sampling of pupil work.</li> <li>• Review questions on staff, pupil and parent surveys, to ensure gender issues are covered and perceptions can be captured.</li> </ul>		Leadership team	Head and deputy	Leadership team and governing body