Sacred Heart.
RC Primary School Westhoughton
More than a school. A community of love.
Love | Learn | Serve | Shine

Equality objectives and annual equality update

Objectives 2026 to 2030 | Annual update October 2026

Our commitment

Our Catholic mission calls us to recognise the God given dignity of every person. “Ut Diligatis Invicem” expresses our commitment to love one another. We want every child and adult to experience belonging, fair treatment and the support needed to participate in school life. Our commitments to Love, Learn, Serve and Shine shape this work.

Our equality duties

We will give due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. Equality considerations will inform decisions before they are made, including policies, budgets, curriculum, staffing and access to activities.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The application of particular protections differs between pupils, employment and other functions. Age and marriage and civil partnership are not protected characteristics for the school pupil provisions. Marriage and civil partnership is relevant to the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, rather than the other two limbs of the public sector equality duty.

Our Catholic character is expressed within the applicable legal framework. We will challenge prejudice and support every child and family. Disability and special educational needs are not interchangeable; reasonable adjustments may be required whether or not a pupil has SEN or an education health and care plan.

Publication and review

The school publishes information demonstrating compliance with the public sector equality duty annually and reviews its equality objectives at least every four years. The objective period is October 2026 to October 2030. The next annual statement is due by October 2027. The accessibility plan is published separately.

Equality objectives 2026 to 2030

These objectives set out measurable priorities for 2026–2030. Baselines not yet available will be established by December 2026, with progress scrutinised termly by governors. Targets are planned outcomes, not claims of achievement.

1 Improve access and progress for disabled pupils

Purpose. Reduce barriers to learning and participation through consistent reasonable adjustments and adaptive teaching.

Actions. Identify barriers with pupils and families; record and implement reasonable adjustments; use termly assess plan do review cycles for pupils receiving SEN support; check access to trips, clubs, worship, pupil leadership and the wider curriculum. Align actions with the accessibility plan and school improvement plan.

Success measures. From spring 2027, 100% of pupils receiving SEN support have a recorded termly review. Sampled plans identify adjustments, pupil and family input, and the effect on learning. By July 2027, at least 80% of pupils with SEND meet their agreed individual progress targets, with reasons and revised support recorded where they do not. Review this target annually against starting points. Investigate and address every identified disability related barrier to an activity.

Accountability. SENCOs and Head of School, with class teachers responsible for implementation; Executive Headteacher reports termly to governors.

2 Reduce unequal barriers to attendance

Purpose. Improve access to education where disability, health needs or other equality related circumstances create attendance barriers.

Actions. Analyse attendance by disability or SEND and other relevant groups where information is reliable. Consider intersecting disadvantage without treating disadvantage as a protected characteristic. Agree individual support with families, including reasonable adjustments. Use DfE attendance analysis alongside school records. Teachers check named pupils on the attendance risk list daily and alert the attendance team in line with safeguarding procedures.

Success measures. By December 2026, establish the previous full year baseline and current comparable period figures. From spring 2027, every pupil below 90% attendance has a documented review of barriers, agreed support or an explanation of the next action. Report termly on attendance and persistent absence gaps, support delivered and individual improvement. Agree numerical gap reduction targets once the baseline is verified. Do not use a short autumn period as a whole year outcome.

Accountability. Mrs P Cox, Senior Pastoral Lead and Attendance Officer, with class teachers and SENCOs; governors scrutinise termly.

Equality objectives continued

3 Strengthen safety respect and belonging

Purpose. Help pupils recognise prejudice, report concerns and understand the dignity and rights of others.

Actions. Audit curriculum resources and age appropriate teaching for representation and stereotypes across protected characteristics. Use the Catholic curriculum, relationships education, assemblies and pupil leadership to build respectful relationships. Train staff to recognise and record prejudice related incidents, including racist, disability related, sexist and homophobic language, and to support those affected.

Success measures. By July 2027, complete a curriculum and resource audit and act on identified omissions. By July 2027, all staff receive a briefing on reporting and responding to prejudice. All recorded incidents have a documented response and follow up. Establish a pupil belonging and reporting confidence baseline by spring 2027; repeat annually and act on group differences where safe to report. Review incident patterns termly; a rise in reports may indicate greater confidence and must not automatically be treated as worsening behaviour.

Accountability. Head of School and curriculum leaders with the pastoral team and Lay Chaplain; pupil voice informs the termly governor report.

4 Make communication and opportunities accessible

Purpose. Reduce avoidable barriers for families, staff and applicants, including disabled people and those needing language or communication support.

Actions. Offer accessible formats and communication support according to need. Check the readability and accessibility of key website information and forms. Review recruitment, induction, staff development and reasonable adjustment arrangements. Seek feedback from families whose voices are less often heard and address barriers to participation.

Success measures. By December 2026, publish a clear route for requesting accessible information or adjustments. By July 2027, audit key public documents and recruitment materials and record actions against each barrier. Review every request for adjustments and record the response and reasons, with an agreed review date where needed. Report annually on themes and actions without identifying individuals.

Accountability. Executive Headteacher and School Business Manager with the school office; full governing board oversees employment and policy decisions.

How governors will hold leaders to account

Each term, governors will ask which barriers have reduced, whose experience has not improved, whether adjustments are working and what leaders have changed as a result. Reports should show the evidence, limitations, action owner and next review date. Where an objective is off track, governors will agree additional support or a revised approach and record their decision.

Annual equality update October 2026

This statement describes the school's established arrangements and priorities for the 2025–26 academic year and the start of 2026–27. Where comparative or disaggregated evidence has not yet been verified, the school reports the limitation transparently and identifies the review action. It does not claim unverified improvements.

Eliminating discrimination and promoting good relations

The school's Catholic mission and commitments to Love, Learn, Serve and Shine provide a framework for teaching dignity, service and respect. Pupil leadership opportunities include Apostles, Mission Ambassadors, Mini Vinnies, Farmers and Stewards of Creation, Worship Leaders, Pupil Parliament, School Council, Eco Team, Sports Leaders, Digital Leaders, Reading Ambassadors, TT Tutors, Playground Pals, Arts Leaders, Library Leaders, Safety Ambassadors, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Choir Leaders, Buddy Bench and subject champions. Depending on the role, pupils join through selection, self-nomination, application or teacher referral. This provides different ways for pupils to express interest and have their strengths recognised. Staff consider barriers associated with disability, special educational needs, communication, confidence and individual circumstances, and make reasonable adjustments where required. Participation and pupil feedback will be reviewed for underrepresentation; the availability of roles alone is not evidence of equal participation or improved belonging.

The school records and responds to concerns about discriminatory or prejudicial conduct through its safeguarding and behaviour procedures. The 2025–26 incident and complaints records, responses and follow-up will inform the next termly governor review. Verified incident totals and representative pupil feedback are not available for inclusion in this public statement; no assertion is made that no incidents occurred or that all pupils have the same experience.

Advancing equality of opportunity

School priorities supplied for 2026 to 2027 include early identification of need, termly assess plan do review cycles and adaptive teaching. The published SEN information report has been updated for 2026. These arrangements support the proposed objective on disability access and progress. Implementation and impact should be tested through plan reviews, classroom evidence and pupil and family feedback.

The school will verify any relevant inclusion funding allocation and report how funded provision addresses identified barriers. Receipt of funding alone is not evidence of improved outcomes.

Attainment and progress

School supplied 2026 school figures indicate 86% of Year 6 pupils meeting the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics, and 82% achieving a good level of development in Reception. These are whole cohort figures. They do not establish that differences between protected groups have narrowed.

The 2026 figures are whole-cohort measures, not evidence that differences between protected groups have narrowed. Leaders will examine relevant pupil-group outcomes and individual progress, identify barriers and act on findings. Small-group data will not be published where individuals might be identified.

Attendance and participation

The school's stated approach includes Mrs P Cox leading attendance support, family contact and attendance improvement plans. Persistent absence means missing 10% or more of possible sessions. Attendance must be considered alongside disability, health, safeguarding and family circumstances, with reasonable adjustments where required. Early autumn attendance is not representative of a full academic year.

Full-year comparative attendance and participation analyses by relevant protected characteristics have not yet been verified for publication. Leaders will examine comparable periods and participation in visits, clubs and pupil leadership, including the impact of individual adjustments, and report emerging patterns to governors without identifying pupils.

Annual update actions and adoption

Accessible information and employment

The school has updated public information about SEND, attendance, uniform and protected characteristics. Its single-storey accommodation includes step-free access, accessible entrances, classrooms and toilets. Individual mobility, intimate-care and medical arrangements are planned where needed. Families and staff can request accessible information or reasonable adjustments through the school office. Accessibility testing, feedback and recruitment practices will be reviewed as part of the 2026–27 programme; the school does not claim a completed independent audit.

Evidence review and next steps

- Leaders will check that the current SEN information report, accessibility plan and relevant behaviour, complaints and employment arrangements remain available on the school website.
- Leaders will verify final assessment and attendance datasets and evaluate significant barriers, actions and impact using appropriately anonymised information.
- Behaviour, prejudice-related incidents, complaints and safeguarding themes will be reviewed, with due regard to confidentiality and the possibility of under-reporting.
- Existing pupil, parent and staff feedback, requests for reasonable adjustments and participation information will inform decisions and subsequent reports.
- The Executive Headteacher will report progress and evidence limitations to the Governing Board termly. Numerical attendance-gap targets will be set when a reliable baseline is established.

Confidentiality and public reporting

Publish sufficient information to explain actions and impact without disclosing personal or sensitive information. Use aggregated data only where it cannot identify individuals, especially in small groups. Keep detailed casework and confidential workforce information in restricted records. Do not collect sensitive information simply to populate this report; use necessary, proportionate and lawfully held evidence.

Approval record

Presented for approval: Governing Board meeting, 2 December 2026.
Decision: ☐ Approved ☐ Approved subject to amendments ☐ Deferred
Actual approval date: _____
Minute reference: _____
Next annual equality information update: October 2027.
Equality objectives review / renewal: no later than October 2030.
This document must not be described as approved until the Governing Board has made and recorded its decision.

Next annual update due: October 2027
Objectives to be renewed no later than: October 2030

Sources and linked school documents

Department for Education — What maintained schools must or should publish online, Public sector equality duty section, checked 20 October 2026.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online

Department for Education — Equality Act 2010 advice for schools.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools

Read alongside the school’s SEN information report 2026, accessibility plan, school improvement plan, pupil premium strategy, behaviour and anti bullying policies, complaints procedure and admissions arrangements.