**S**t. John Fisher Catholic Primary School

**Single Equality Scheme 2022 – 2023**

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**1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and Aims**

**1.1 Characteristics of our school**

This is a smaller than an average-sized primary school with 211 children currently on roll. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to free school meals and eligible for Pupil Premium is

25%. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds (99%) and very few speak English as an additional language (1%). The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is 22% with 5 children with a EHC plan. The school also has 1% of pupils who are from Travelling families. Currently the school has 1 Looked After Child, however, this fluctuates with the high mobility of children within the Halton LA.

**1.2 School values**

At St John Fisher we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel able to participate fully in school life. The achievements of all pupils will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. At St John Fisher we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Mission Statement:

**Growing Through God we learn, laugh and love.**

At St. John Fisher we aim

 to foster a living Christian Community where all are valued and treated equally without being discriminated against for their own beliefs

 to create an environment in which to thrive as you learn, enjoy and achieve your full potential

 to work collaboratively with the Home, the Parish and the Wider Community to strengthen our partnerships and through this our School

At St. John Fisher we endeavor to achieve our aims

 by teaching the “Come and See” programme throughout the school

 by living our Christian values of love and respect, forgiveness and freedom

 by providing opportunities for all to fully develop their true potential

 by developing community cohesion through working in partnership with the

Home, the Parish and Wider Community

**1.3 Setting our priorities**

**The priorities for the SES are set in the light of**:

 Summarised in the Action Plan ;

 Views expressed by stakeholders that have been involved in the development of the scheme;

 Consultation held widely as well as representation through the working party;

**Our priorities are:**

**Children and young people**

 Diminishing the difference between different groups of children and young people in the school e.g. children using alternative forms of communication *(Hearing Impaired, EAL*

*– Children with English as and additional language),* those in receipt of pupil premium *(Free School Meal children or Looked After Children)* and Looked After Children *(Which at present the school has non – This objective will automatically be incorporated into the scheme as and when the school has any LAC);*

 challenging race and gender stereotypes in subject choices and career advice;

**Our community**

 improving the involvement of children and young people, parents and carers from minority ethnic backgrounds e.g. English Gypsies and Irish Travellers (Travelling Families);

 improving access to information e.g. translation and interpretation to inform and engage parents/carers for whom English is an Additional Language (We have a number of families with EAL);

**Our school community**

 improving the involvement of disabled children and young people, staff and parents and carers

 tackling bullying based on race, religion, gender, disability, sexuality or poverty;

 considering objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap or differences between groups;

 promoting positive attitudes toward diversity;

**2. Principles of Our SES**

**2.1 Purpose of the SES**

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all students, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation.

The purpose of our **Single Equality Scheme (SES)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with ‘protected characteristics’, and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our **provisions, criteria and practices.** We recognise within this Scheme the inequality linked to poverty and socio-economic factors and those of

our families from Gypsy Roma Backgrounds.

Our SES enables us to meet the **duties** under equality legislation, and to achieve the following for all groups:

 eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination;

 eliminate harassment and bullying (schools must keep accurate records of bullying and harassment related to equalities and report as required to the Local Authority);

 advance equality of opportunity through vision, strategy and practice;

 foster good relations.

Through our SES we make links to all our actions and commitments to:

 promote community cohesion;

 narrow the attainment gap in outcomes between children and young people;

**2.2 A Relevant and Proportionate Approach**

In promoting equality and complying with legislation we apply the principles of relevance and proportionality. We aim to ensure that our actions are **proportionate** to the equality issues within our school and **relevant**. This means we prioritise those actions that enable us to tackle the most significant issues with regard to equality in order to deliver the best equality outcomes. In doing this we focus on **provisions, criteria and practices** that have the greatest effect, or potential effect on different stakeholders.

We do not assume that existing representation alone determines relevance, so we apply the principle of **anticipatory duty** in helping us to identify what is relevant. We also anticipate that there will be ‘hidden’ disabilities and equality issues so we are thorough in identifying factors

that lead, or have the potential to lead, to inequality. For example mental health issues and issues around being a young carer.

We ask whether our **provisions, criteria and practices** affect different groups in different ways and try to implement them in ways that promote equality. This is achieved through systematic **monitoring of outcomes**, **impact assessment** and **action planning** incorporating the fullest possible **participation of stakeholders**.

**2.3 Participation**

Participation is based on information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take particular step to ensure disabled children and young people, parents and carers are involved as is their entitlement as we have a high proportion of children with physical needs.

Our working party will include representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve (Governors, Teachers, Senior Management, Pupils with disabilities, Parents with disabilities, Staff with disabilities, Parents with EAL; English as and Additional Language; or children with EAL, SENCo, TAs). They are responsive to the diversity in our school and organised in such a way as to promote direct participation.

The Responsibility of setting up the working party will be the Assistant Headteacher and the

school’s Senior Management Team.

The Key Functions of the Working Party will be:

• To ensure the involvement of disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff regarding the disability equality duty.

• To arrange for the gathering of information.

• To consider arrangements for race, disability and gender impact assessments.

The governing body carries the ultimate responsibility for implementing equality legislation and the governors play a key role in supporting senior staff to drive forward equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Therefore, the Senior Management Team and Governing body will monitor and assess the impact of the Single Equality Scheme (SES) annually.

The school involves all stakeholders including children and young people, staff, parents/carers and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country.

**2.4 Anticipation**

We apply the principle of the **’Anticipatory Duty’** in all aspects of our SES which means that we think ahead about how our **provisions, criteria and practices** may affect different members of our school. This is embodied specifically in the process of risk assessment where we consider not only the impacts but also the potential impacts, whether positive or negative, we are a school with no Looked after children (LAC) at present however, we could in the future as the school is situation within a low socio economic area.

**3. Responsibilities**

**3.1 Governing Body**

As it states in, ‘The Statutory Guidance on School Governing Bodies,’ the governing body at St John Fisher Catholic Primary has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the governing body discharges this responsibility through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

**3.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

 raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community;

 referring to relevant and up-to-date documentation from the Equality and Human Rights

Commission (EHRC);

 ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability;

 sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school;

 ensuring that action plans are undertaken for all protected characteristics;

 setting up the working party, with membership to include:

- SLT member

- Governor

- Parent/carer

- Staff representative

- SENCO

- Associate members e.g. disabled children and young people, school council reps, community / voluntary groups and minority ethnic groups;

 ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately;

 providing appropriate training for staff, Governors and other members of the school community;

 Monitor the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions;

 In the event of expectations not being met, ensuring action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved.

**3.3 All Members of the School Community**

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of our community (staff, governors, children and young people etc) contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

 contributing to the SES implementation and review process (Through the working party, which includes representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve)

 raising issues with line managers which have an impact or potential impact on the

school’s **provisions, criteria and practices**;

 maintaining an awareness of, and professional interest in, the school’s current SES and

the **provisions, criteria and practices** to which it relates;

 implementing **provisions, criteria and practices** in accordance with agreed protocols and standards;

 behaving with respect and fairness to all members of the school community

**4. The working party**

Our working party is involved throughout the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the SES. The Key Functions of the Working Party are:

 to ensure the involvement of the widest possible range of people representing the different protected characteristics;

 to arrange for the gathering of information relating to all protected characteristics;

 to consider arrangements for impact assessments;

 to report to the leadership team on outcomes of information gathering and impact assessment;

**5. Information gathering**

**5.1 Purpose and process**

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school’s aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

**5.2 Types of information gathered**

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

 Identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;

 Pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;

 Children and young people views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;

 Sports and activities choices of all groups;

 Uptake of the extended school offer by group;

 Exclusions data analysed by group;

 Records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;

 Data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;

 Outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;

 Outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage;

 Staff Code of Conduct – which sets out the expectations of all staff.

**6. Outcomes**

Of all the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups covered under the Single Equality Scheme. We record our outcomes using a wide range of criteria, both academic and experiential, for the various protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups, mindful of the principles of proportionality, relevance and potential impacts (whether positive or adverse).

**7. Equality Impact Assessment**

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed **provisions, criteria and practices** in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school’s **provisions, criteria and practices** are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

We undertake our impact assessment in a relevant, proportionate and systematic way. In addition to using the **Overview of Outcomes** as a focused starting point, impact assessments are incorporated into the school’s planned review and revision of every policy and are also undertaken according to other **established criteria** through a **screening process**.

Screening **provisions, criteria and practices** helps us know how much each one promotes, or has the potential to promote equality, and whether or not a full equality impact assessment is necessary. Screening is not a substitute for full equality impact assessment but an aid to managing the impact assessment process. We are aware that many PCPs have the potential to affect different groups in different ways and this is factored into the screening process.

Every new **provision, criteria and practice** is drawn up with regard to the school’s duties as described in this SES, and is subject to the process of impact assessment in relation to potential positive or adverse impacts.

**8. Action Plans**

We have action plans covering all relevant protected characteristics. See St John Fisher SES Action Plan and Accessibility Policy / Plan*.* These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

The action plans show:

 objectives and specific actions;

 expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);

 clear timescales;

 who has lead responsibility;

 resource implications;

 specified dates for impact assessment and review.

Our SES relates to a range of other policies and plans, and will be implemented through them and the procedures and practices that relate to them. These policies are listed in the appendices and significantly include our Accessibility Plan and Safeguarding Policy.

**9. Publication and reporting**

The working party decides how best to publish the SES. The school provides a copy in a range of formats and actively makes it available to parents/carers and others, including those identified as difficult to engage. The school prospectus will include a reference to the SES and the values underpinning it.

The school will report annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the SES itself on school ethos and practice within the school in addition to the impact assessments done on the full range of **provisions, criteria and practices**.

**10. Review**

As part of the review of the SES, the school commits to:

 revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SES

and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;

 using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SES informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans. This process continues to:

 involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;

 be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;

 use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.

**11. Glossary of Terms**

Act: advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Age: This refers to a person having a particular age (for example, 32 year-olds) or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year-olds).

Belief: see Religion and belief

Civil partnership: Legal recognition of a same-sex couples relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

Direct discrimination: This refers to less favourable treatment because of a person's protected characteristic.

Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Equality Act 2010: This brings together the majority of existing equality legislation into one place so that it is easier to use. It also strengthens the legislation in some areas. It sets out the protected characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful.

Equality information: The information that you have (or that you will collect) about people with protected characteristics that will help you to show compliance with the equality duty. This will include the findings of engagement with protected groups and others and the effect of your policies on protected groups. It includes both qualitative and quantitative information, as well as evidence of analysis you have undertaken.

Equality objectives: A requirement to prepare, set and publish objectives is one of the specific duties set out under the equality duty.

Fostering good relations: The Equality Act 2010 states that having due regard to the need to fostering good relations involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Gender: refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. "Male" and "female" are sex categories, while "masculine" and "feminine" are gender categories.

Gender reassignment: This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. See also trans, transgender, transsexual.

General duty: The requirement to show due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the

Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may also involve unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or be related

to gender reassignment or sex.

Indirect discrimination: This is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied in a way that creates disproportionate disadvantage for a person with a protected characteristic as compared to those who do not share that characteristic, and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

LAC (Looked After Children): Is a term generally used to mean those looked after by the state. Marriage: A union between a man and a woman.

Maternity: The period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

Positive action: Lawful actions that seeks to overcome or minimise disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs (for

example, providing mentoring to encourage staff from underrepresented groups to apply for promotion).

Pregnancy: The condition of being pregnant.

Protected characteristics: The equality duty covers the following characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are also referred to as protected groups. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

Public authority: The general equality duty applies to public authorities. For this purpose, a public authority is a body that is named (listed) or described in Schedule19 of the Equality Act. It also applies to other organisations who exercise public functions. This includes private bodies or voluntary organisations which are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority.

Pupil Premium: Funding aimed at children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Race: This is the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Reasonable adjustment: Public authorities making adjustments to the way in which they carry out their functions so that disabled people are not disadvantaged by the way in which those functions are carried out. This is with regard to policies, practices or procedures, premises, and the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

Religion or belief: Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included. 46

Sex: Someone being a man or a woman. "Sex" refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women.

Sexual orientation: This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Stakeholders: People with an interest in a subject or an issue who are likely to be affected by any decision relating to it and/or have responsibilities relating to it.

Statutory Code of Practice: A document which offers practical guidance on the law, has been approved by parliament and is admissible as evidence in a Court of law.

Trans: The terms „trans people‟ and „transgender people‟ are both often used as umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex, including transsexual people (those who propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender),

transvestite/cross-dressing people (those who wear clothing traditionally associated with the other gender either occasionally or more regularly), androgyne/polygender people (those who have non-binary gender identities and do not identify as male or female), and others who define as gender variant.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. They may or may not seek to undergo gender reassignment hormonal treatment/surgery. Often used interchangeably with trans.

Transsexual: A person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery). Transsexual people feel the deep conviction to present themselves in the appearance of the opposite sex. They may change their name and identity to live in the preferred gender. Some take hormones and have cosmetic treatments to alter their appearance and physical characteristics. Some

undergo surgery to change their bodies to approximate more closely to their preferred gender. Transsexual people have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment under the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, gender reassignment is a personal process rather than a medical one and it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

Victimisation: Subjecting a person to a detriment because they have made a complaint of discrimination, or are thought to have done so; or because they have supported someone else who has made a complaint of discrimination. Victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act

2010.