



Equal Opportunities Policy

Information for Parents: This policy is available on request

The Ursuline Preparatory School does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of the Ursuline Preparatory School. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, by providing a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Ursuline Preparatory School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, learning difficulty, body image or social background. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

We also welcome applications from pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and refer parents to our policy covering Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

This policy has been developed to ensure the inclusion of all pupils with due regard to EYFS, Learning Support, Gifted and Talented, gender, ethnicity, disability, Looked After Children, and those pupils who are on the register in relation to Safeguarding issues. The Ursuline Preparatory School values the worth of every individual and the contribution they make to the school community as a whole.

Promotion of equality of opportunity is legally obligatory, morally incumbent, and sound educational practice. It is the responsibility of all to promote positive attitudes to gender equality and cultural diversity and to remove bias in relation to disability, race, gender and learning ability.

The Ursuline Preparatory School cannot compensate for society's inequalities but is uniquely placed to help pupils to challenge prejudiced assumptions which might deny equality of access to education. With the support of all staff, the equal opportunities policy can become, over time, a central feature of a school as an effective and caring institution.

The policy complies with the following legislation:

SEN Code of Practice 2021
Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (amended 2019)
Race Relations Act 2020
Education Act 2019
Children's Act 2018
Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024
EYFS 2023

If our Equal Opportunities Policy is to work the following criteria must be followed:

- It must be managed;
- responsibility for the policy must be clear and known;
- the policy must be pro-active;
- the policy must be integral to Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education;
- the policy must be emphasised by all areas of the curriculum;
- there must be effective reviewing, monitoring and evaluation to determine future development;
- the policy should achieve a feeling of worth and self-esteem in all pupils and staff to enable them to work and achieve well while feeling secure and valued.

1. Gender

1.1 At Ursuline Preparatory School the fundamental concern is with the wellbeing of the individual and the Catholic community as a whole.

1.2 For pupils this means ensuring that learning potential is maximised and the opportunities are provided for overall personal development. For adults the offer of a secure and safe place to work and visit will help to ensure that they are enabled to make a full and valued contribution to the life of the school.

- 1.3 We must continually strive to develop a curriculum and an ethos which will facilitate these ends. Our planning for the development of the school recognises that issues relating to gender, race, class, sexuality and disability greatly affect an individual's experience of school and society; therefore they need to be taken into consideration.
- 1.4 The policy statement Equal Opportunities (Gender) has been written to specifically address the covert and overt bias experienced in terms of gender inside and outside the classroom. It recognises that sexism militates particularly against women, although boys and men are affected. As teachers we have a responsibility to ensure that both pupils and colleagues are not disadvantaged because of their gender. We therefore examine our practice, raise awareness and make challenges where necessary. This may not be easy because the process of acquiring and practising sexist attitudes is subtle and largely unconscious.
- 1.5 The policy statement will support staff in their efforts to realise the school's objectives of providing equality of opportunity for pupils and staff.

2 Race

2.1 Rationale

This policy has been developed to ensure the inclusion of all pupils with due regard to SEND, Gifted and Talented, gender, ethnicity, disability, Looked after Children and those pupils who are on the register in relation to Safeguarding issues. Ursuline Preparatory School values the worth of every individual and the contribution they make to the school community as a whole.

At Ursuline Preparatory School the fundamental concern is with the well being of the individual and the Catholic Community as a whole. This aim is expressed in the school mission statement which states:

“Our mission is to value the worth of each individual in the school community. All members of the community have an overriding responsibility to support and promote this central purpose so as to enhance the quality of our community life”

Equality of opportunity at Ursuline Preparatory School is based upon the values which we believe reflect the key Christian values and principles of our faith as expressed in the Gospel narratives.

The ethos of the school supports the development of self respect and self-esteem in all pupils, staff and the community it serves. We place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the school as an individual. In this respect, we aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, sexual orientation, ability, disability and social circumstances.

2.2 **Purposes**

Ursuline Preparatory School is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Our policy is based on the three key principles of inclusion. These principles underpin all the functions of our school. These are:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

2.3 A school can only work towards a multicultural goal through careful evaluation and revision of its practices as shown in the Early Years Foundation Stage department.

In order to create and maintain an environment in which a curriculum educates against racism and prejudice clear guidelines must be established.

2.4 **Parents and the community**

For any school to run well, good relationships with parents are required.

2.5 **Dealing with racist behaviour**

Any action which is hurtful to others on grounds of skin colour or ethnic background is racist behaviour. Such behaviour includes:

- physical assault against a person on the grounds of colour or ethnic background;

- derogatory name calling, insults, racist jokes, mimicking accents;
- racist graffiti;
- wearing badges with racist slogans;
- bringing racist literature into school;
- racist comments in class discussions.

It is important to distinguish between name calling which is common in many school playgrounds, and racist abuse and/or bullying. Names such as 'fatty' and 'four eyes' are insulting and should of course be dealt with. However, racial abuse and insults demean the victim's culture, language and identity. Ultimately if it is allowed to go unchallenged, racist behaviour undermines the very fabric of the multicultural society we are attempting to support. Racist behaviour cannot go unchallenged and by the school's response to such behaviour, pupils should perceive that such behaviour is wrong and deplored by every staff member in the school.

It is therefore necessary to have a clear and uniform procedure in order that every pupil will have similar expectations of every member of staff, as a result of which the school's position against racism will be clear.

2.6 Procedure for dealing with racist incidents

Dealing with the perpetrator:

- All incidents are recorded and monitored on CPOMS;
- Firmly explain to the perpetrator the wrong they have done and the damage they have caused;
- Send the perpetrator to the Headteacher to establish the seriousness of the offence;
- Contact parents to inform them of the offence, action taken and to allow them an opportunity to discuss the matter and to have the policy clearly explained to them.

3 Disability

3.1 Rationale

The school is aware that pupils suffering from physical disabilities are valued and accepted as individuals. They must be given a quality learning experience which enables them to maximise their potential.

The school should seek to enrich the lives of all pupils with physical disabilities.

This policy has been developed to ensure the inclusion of all pupils with due regard to SEND, Able, Gifted and Talented, gender, ethnicity, disability, Looked After Children and those pupils who are on the register in relation to Safeguarding issues. Ursuline Preparatory School values the worth of every individual and the contribution they make to the school community as a whole.

3.2 Purposes

- To ensure all pupils have an effective learning experience;
- to integrate the pupils fully into the school;
- to ensure that specialist staff's work is co-ordinated; to link Equal Opportunities policy with Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 Our aim is to ensure all pupils achieve standards at the highest levels. Pupil achievement is monitored by formal and informal procedures.
- 4.2 Any pattern of underachievement is addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.
- 4.3 The school will ensure, that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias.
- 4.4 Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection on their progress via individual targets.
- 4.5 All forms of achievement are recognised and valued.
- 4.6 The school promotes positive approaches to difference, fostering respect for people and property. Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, or potentially damaging to any minority group, will not be tolerated.
- 4.7 There is a high expectation of all pupils with regard to behaviour and attendance.

- 4.8 Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures should incidents of harassment arise; and all staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.
- 4.9 The school works in partnership with parents and the community to tackle specific incidents of harassment and to develop positive attitudes to difference.
- 4.10 Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all children.
- 4.11 It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- 4.12 Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

5 Teaching and learning

- 5.1 The teacher ensures that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which children know all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalized, the teacher takes positive steps to include them.
- 5.2 Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning needs in order to engage all pupils.
- 5.3 All children are encouraged and helped to become responsible for their own learning.
- 5.4 Teaching styles include collaborative and co-operative learning so all children appreciate the value of working together. All children are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.
- 5.5 Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge.

6 Curriculum

- 6.1 Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes.
- 6.2 All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum.
- 6.3 The content of the curriculum reflects and values cultural diversity. The choice of literature and text should reflect the diversity of the school and its community.
- 6.4 The curriculum encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.
- 6.5 All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.
- 6.6 Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

7 Policy, leadership, and management

- 7.1 All school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.
- 7.2 The management of the school and the governing body set a clear ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to all its pupils and staff.
- 7.3 Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and wider community.

8 Staff – recruiting, training and professional development

- 8.1 All staff, including non-teaching and part time staff are given status and support.
- 8.2 The induction of new staff addresses issues of equality.
- 8.3 Staff training includes equal opportunities issues.
- 8.4 All members of staff have access to INSET, which will enable professional development.

- 8.5 Recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equal.
- 8.6 The skills of all staff members are recognised and valued and members of staff are encouraged to share their knowledge.

9 **Parents, Governors, and community partnership**

- 9.1 All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.
- 9.2 Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.
- 9.3 We ensure that Governor support is appropriate for all ethnic groups.

10 **Monitoring and review**

- 10.1 All members of staff and the governing body have the responsibility of implementing this policy. The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated on an annual basis by the Headteacher.

11 **Conclusion**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and of the need to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.