



St Mary's C of E (VA) Primary School

Working together
in an inclusive Christian environment
to allow every pupil to shine brighter and brighter.

St Mary's is an inclusive school where we believe that all people are of equal value, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, ability or sexual identity. We recognise and respect differences.

School Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Scheme & Action Plan

This policy is GDPR compliant.

Date of issue:	November 2025
Last reviewed/adopted:	December 2025 (Full Governing Board)
Next review date:	Autumn 2026

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Vision and Values

Underpinned by Christian love and faith, to learn:

- to develop confident children who know success
- to direct our talents towards excellence in all we do
- to nourish mutual respect, in partnership with Parents and Carers, Church and Local Community.

“Shining brighter and brighter”. Proverbs 4:18

Our school vision, “Shining Brighter and Brighter,” reflects the message of Proverbs 4. This chapter encourages everyone to seek wisdom, make good choices and follow the path of light rather than darkness. As we learn and grow in knowledge, character and kindness, our lives shine more brightly, inspiring others and making our whole community stronger. Each child is encouraged to connect our vision to their own personal story and interpretation, recognising how their unique experiences and gifts help them to “shine brighter and brighter” and share that light with others.

At St Mary’s, our Christian values are Respect, Joy, Love, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Courage.

These values are at the heart of our school community. We explore and reflect on them during collective worship, encouraging children to think deeply about how living with—and without—these values affects ourselves, our families, our friendships, and the wider world.

School Context

The characteristics of our school. A brief description of our school and staff (November 2025):

Characteristic	Total	Breakdown
Number of pupils	225	52.8%Female (119) 47.1% Male (106)
Number of staff	40	92.5% Female (37) 7.5% Male (3)
Number of governors	13	53.8% Female (7) 46.2% Male (6)
Religious character		Church of England

Significant partnerships, community services, extended provision, special units		BASH (Berkhamsted Schools’ Partnership) DHC (Dacorum Heads) St Mary’s School Association Herts Music Service Dacorum Sports Partnership Dacorum Education Support Centre (DESC) St Mary’s Church, Northchurch
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		Northchurch Baptist Church Sunnyside Rural Trust Sports Fever Watford Community Sports Ross and Andy's Sports Clubs Berkhamsted Hockey Club Berkhamsted Tennis Club St Mary's Pre-school Breakfast and Afterschool clubs St Albans Teaching Hub
Mobility of school population		Low
Average attendance rate	95.2%	Academic year 2024-2025
Free school meals	20	8.9% (based on statutory school age)
SEN	38	16.9%
EHCP pupils	4	1.7%
Racial and ethnic minority pupils	21	9.3%
Racial and ethnic minority staff	5	12.5%
English as an additional language pupils	13	5.7%

Legal Background

We are committed to meeting the public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

General Duty under the Equality Act 2010

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties require schools to:

- Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- To set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for the schools' provisions are:

- Age (for staff only)
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race
- Gender (sex)
- Gender identity and reassignment
- Pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership (staff only)

Disability

Inclusion is a strength and is at the heart of St Mary's school vision. Through our rigorous monitoring systems, we track and adjust the provision to reduce barriers to learning and provide equitable access for all.

We celebrate diversity and encourage respectful relationships by raising awareness of the diverse community in which we live and our individual uniqueness and differences, working together to create an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued, respected and safe.

Our school implements an accessibility plan which is aimed at:

- enabling disabled pupils to participate fully in the curriculum through adaptations and reasonable adjustments
- improving the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion supports good practice in educating pupils about equality and diversity. It contributes to the schools' efforts to provide a broad, balanced curriculum.

- Total commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils and staff
- Careful tracking of disadvantaged pupils and those with disabilities
- Strong partnerships with parents/carers to improve outcomes for pupils
- Commitment to sustainability and development of awareness of global issues

Gender

We ensure all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and provide a wide range of extra-curriculum activities. Care is taken to show positive role models and challenge gender stereotypes, and both genders are encouraged to join in all activities.

We carefully monitor achievements, outcomes and behaviour according to gender to ensure no group is at a disadvantage. Should a discrepancy arise, the curriculum or provision would be adjusted accordingly.

Race

We aim to ensure that all pupils experience a range of diverse cultures as part of the national curriculum. We encourage contributions from different ethnic and faith backgrounds from within the school community and through external visitors and encourage discussion and debate to develop understanding and appreciation of different experiences and viewpoints.

Roles and Responsibilities

We operate equality of opportunity in our day-to-day practice.

The Governing Board, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively. All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

The Governing Board will:

- provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of our equality scheme
- actively seek out new governors to ensure its composition reflects the community it serves
- apply the principles of best value without discrimination when purchasing goods and services
- monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of this policy using the outcomes to inform future plans

The Governing Board expects all members of our school community to be committed to this policy, and that visitors will comply with it. It accepts responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in every aspect of school life. If there is a breach of the policy, appropriate action will be taken.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:

- Ensure a culture exists which celebrates diversity, equality and achievement
- Initiate and oversee the development, regular review and implementation of equality policies and procedures
- Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders

- Ensure that staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies

- Be accountable for the behaviour of staff and pupils
- Behave at all times in accordance with the school's policies and lead by example
- Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils
- Highlight good practice from, staff, governors, visitors and pupils
- Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents following agreed policies and procedures, e.g. peer-on-peer abuse and prejudice-related incidents
- Ensure that we carry out our statutory duties effectively
- Comply fully with legislation which protects staff from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. With regard to disability, reasonable adjustments will be made to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled.

Our staff will:

- Contribute to consultations and reviews
- Raise issues with senior leaders which could contribute to policy review and development
- Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures
- Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of our equality scheme
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents following agreed policies and procedures, e.g. peer-on-peer abuse and prejudice-related incidents
- Contribute to the implementation of our equality scheme

Our pupils will:

- Show respect for all staff and pupils in the spirit of the equality policy and scheme
- Celebrate the many differences we have in our school community and in the community beyond school
- Report any concerns they have about members of the school community being treated unfairly to an adult

Our parents and carers will:

- Support our ethos of equality for all
- Contribute to the consultation and review process
- Show respect for all staff and pupils
- Support celebrations of the diversity within our school community and beyond by, for example, attending events
- Report any concerns regarding non-adherence to our equality scheme

Engagement – Participation and Involvement

Our school is committed to encourage everyone to contribute to the development and review of all policies affecting life at the school and its impact on the wider community. Pupils, staff, parents / carers and governors have all inputted to the development of this scheme.

When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions – parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the schools' approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations.

Evidence of this engagement will be included in published information showing how the duty has been addressed.

Using Information – Equality Impact Assessment, Data and Other Information

Our aim is to monitor the impact of actions taken to ensure:

- our school environment is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying,
- that we meet our legal obligations as a service provider and an employer,
- we provide equitable access to learning, provision and positive experiences across the school

To monitor progress of the scheme, we collect a range of information and data that is all handled in accordance with the Privacy Policy:

- Progress, achievements and outcomes broken down by protected characteristics, SEND, PPG, allergies
- Incidents of harassment and bullying including but not limited to those relating to racism, disability, gender and religious belief.
- We conduct pupil voice activities and monitor behaviour and incidents at playtime, lunchtime, breakfast and after school clubs and extra curriculum activities.

An annual report will be produced that outlines progress of the Equality Scheme and the implementation and effectiveness of the action plans. This report will be circulated by the Headteacher to Governors and staff, and the findings will be used to improve the Equality Scheme and feed into future practices.

Action Plan & Annual Progress Review November 2025

These objectives support the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

They focus on areas the school has identified as a priority and will be set at least every four years.

Objective	Overview	Rationale
1. Improve academic progress, attainment and functional outcomes for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). <i>✓(PSED: advancing equality of opportunity for disabled pupils)</i>	Ensure pupils with SEND make sustained academic and social progress in line with their peers ensuring equitable access to learning, provision and positive experiences across the school to reduce barriers to learning and increase wellbeing.	Outcomes for SEND pupils remain lower than for non-SEND pupils both nationally and at school level.
2. Close attainment and attendance gaps between disadvantaged pupils (PPG) and their non-disadvantaged peers. <i>✓(PSED: advancing equality of opportunity related to socio-economic disadvantage)</i>	Increase progress, attainment and attendance for disadvantaged pupils (PPG) through targeted academic, pastoral support, supportive partnerships with families and consistent monitoring.	Attainment is lower within disadvantaged pupils and research has shown a strong link between attendance and academic performance.
3. Ensure pupils, staff, governors and families have a clear understanding of prejudice, discrimination, bullying and misogyny, and maintain low numbers of identity-based incidents across the whole school community. <i>✓(PSED: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation)</i>	Embed opportunities across the curriculum and school environment to build a common understanding among pupils and adults about prejudice and discrimination and maintain low numbers of identity-related incidents through education, prevention, effective reporting and consistent response.	Taking a whole-school approach to challenge discrimination recognises the role of adult modelled behaviour, reporting culture, and professional conduct.
4. Foster a whole-school culture of belonging, representation and inclusion where every pupil, staff member, governor and family feels valued, respected and safe, and where equality informs leadership, systems, policies and decision-making. <i>✓(PSED: fostering good relations & eliminating discrimination through culture and systems)</i>	Develop a whole-school common understanding of equality, equity and inclusion and embed into everyday practices through training, policies, systems, curriculum, resources, communication, collaboration, modelled behaviour and positive action.	A combined inclusion and diversity strategy is more effective than distinct objectives for each as it elevates the focus to creating a genuinely inclusive environment and sense of belonging over individual activities or celebrations.

Objective	Actions Required	Target Date	Responsible	Resources / Monitoring	Success Criteria/Evaluation
1. Improve academic progress, attainment and functional outcomes for pupils with SEND so that they achieve in line with their peers and are able to access all aspects of school life	● Implement structured, supportive lunchtime and extra-curricular provision for pupils with SEND - use pupil voice to identify preferences. ● Deliver specialist SEND training for lunch and club staff. ● Ensure reasonable adjustments and accessible classroom environments are consistently in place across all year groups. ● Use the APDR cycle with all SEND pupils in partnership with parents/carers. ● Monitor academic and non-academic outcomes termly, including engagement, independence, communication, relationships with peers and wellbeing. ● Create a SEND-specific baseline for measurement using disaggregated outcomes and provision mapping.	Ongoing (review termly)	SENDCo, SLT, Class Teachers	● Attainment data ● APDR, SEND Support Plan, EHCP ● Functional outcome tracking ● Lunchtime, classroom and clubs observations. ● Incident reports with SEND data ● Staff, parent and pupil voice ● SEND provision maps. ● Governors' SEND link visits. ● Disaggregate SEND data by need type and year group to establish a SEND-specific baseline."	● Attainment gap between pupils with SEND and non-SEND peers reduces. ● Proportion of pupils with SEND making expected or better progress increases. ● Engagement and average attendance for pupils with SEND increases. ● Reported positive experiences of lunch and clubs for pupils with SEND increase. ● Recorded lunchtime incidents involving pupils with SEND reduce. ● Increased numbers SEND parents/carers report confidence in the school's support systems .
2. Close the attainment and attendance gaps between disadvantaged pupils (PPG) and their non-disadvantaged peers	● Monitor and analyse termly attainment and attendance data for disadvantaged pupils. ● Deliver targeted academic and pastoral interventions based on identified needs. ● Provide transport or practical support where barriers to attendance are identified. ● Hold structured termly attendance and progress meetings with families of persistently absent disadvantaged pupils. ● Create a PPG-specific baseline for measurement using disaggregated outcomes and provision mapping.	Ongoing (review termly)	SLT, Attendance Lead, Class Teachers	● Attainment data ● Attendance tracking ● Pupil Progress meeting notes ● Parent meeting records ● Disaggregate data by year group and disadvantage status to establish a PPG baseline."	● Attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils reduces. ● The proportion of PPG pupils achieving age-related expectations in reading, writing and maths increases. ● Percentage of PPG families engaging in at least one school meeting or event annually increases. ● Number of persistently absent PPG pupils reduces.

Objective	Actions Required	Target Date	Responsible	Resources / Monitoring	Success Criteria/Evaluation
3. Increase understanding of discrimination, prejudice, bullying and misogyny across the school community and maintain low numbers of prejudice-related incidents through education, reporting and consistent response.	● Deliver termly curriculum themes and assemblies addressing bullying, prejudice, stereotyping and respectful relationships. ● Provide age-appropriate workshops to pupils, staff and families on discrimination, harassment and bystander responsibility. ● Introduce pupils to diverse and inspirational role models that challenge stereotypes. ● Support pupil-led campaigns focused on anti-bullying and respect (e.g. School Council campaigns). ● Record and analyse all prejudice-related and identity-based incidents consistently - termly. ● Strengthen reporting systems so pupils, staff and families feel confident to come forward. ● Train staff on recognising, recording and responding to prejudice-based incidents. ● Create a baseline for measurement using disaggregated data.	Ongoing (annual review each Nov)	SLT, PSHE Lead, Class Teachers	● CW/assembly schedules. ● Workshop attendance. ● Pupil voice surveys. ● Incident logs reviewed by Governors. ● Parent/carers feedback.	● Pupils and staff can accurately explain what discrimination, prejudice and bullying are, and how to challenge them. ● The number of recorded prejudice-related incidents involving pupils and/or adults is kept low. ● The number of bullying or harassment incidents linked to protected characteristics is kept low. ● The percentage of pupils and staff who report feeling confident to report discrimination, bullying or prejudice-related incidents increases. ● Staff confidence in identifying, reporting and responding to prejudice-related incidents increases. ● Record shows consistency in responses to prejudice-related incidents. ● Positive responses in pupil wellbeing surveys relating to safety and respect increase.

Objective	Actions Required	Target Date	Responsible	Resources / Monitoring	Success Criteria/Evaluation
4. Foster a whole-school culture of belonging, representation and inclusion where every pupil, staff member, governor and family feels valued, respected and safe, and where equality informs leadership, systems, policies and decision-making	● Deliver staff CPD on inclusive practice, SEND, cultural competency and unconscious bias. ● Provide annual equality and inclusion workshops for staff, governors and parents/carers. ● Demonstrate how school policies and key decisions give due regard to equality and inclusion (through use of Equality Impact Assessments / EIA's). ● Make inclusion and belonging a standing agenda item at staff and governor meetings. ● Audit curriculum content, displays, books and resources for positive, diverse representation - including positive gender role models and challenging stereotypes - address gaps. ● Reflect diversity and inclusion throughout school communications, events and staff/pupil achievements ● Ensure external visitors reflect a wide range of protected characteristics. ● Promote inclusive staff and governor recruitment and monitor diversity of applicants and appointments. ● Run collaborative, pupil-led projects focused on identity, belonging and representation. ● Create a baseline for measurement using disaggregated outcomes data.	CPD by x date Workshops Autumn & Spring each year; Ongoing communications Audits by x date with refresh each Spring term	SLT, Curriculum Leads, Class Teachers, Governors	● Attendance, behaviour/exclusion data - disaggregated by SEND, PPG, protected characteristics ● Structured, small focus groups and interviews with diverse representation from the school community ● Training / workshop attendance ● Parent forum minutes. ● Decision-making record ● Staff and pupil wellbeing surveys - create baseline if needed ● Curriculum & resource audits ● CW schedule ● Visitor/event logs ● Pupil voice surveys ● Diversity data for recruitment	● The percentage of pupils who report feeling a strong sense of belonging increases. ● The percentage of staff who report feeling valued and included increases. ● All statutory school policies demonstrate explicit reference to equality and inclusion . ● The proportion of curriculum units audited as positively representative increases. ● The key decision-making process demonstrates clear consideration of equality and inclusion through documented record. ● The diversity of staff and governors increases.