

Twelve Apostles RCPS

Equality Policy



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Twelve Apostles Catholic Primary School

Equality Policy

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Section 1

Mission Statement:

'Through learning and loving we will follow Jesus.'

1. To place Christ at the centre of everything we do
2. To recognise that each child is unique and to ensure that each child is educated to fulfil their human potential
3. To develop an understanding of Community; being able to recognise, respect and celebrate the diversity of all within it.

Section 2

Introduction:

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The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act, and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

This Equality Policy, Equality Objectives and Objectives Action Plan sets out the school's approach to promoting equality and diversity in-line with legislative requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

The Single Equality Act reflects the Government's commitment, 'to narrowing gaps, and to tackling the barriers to equal opportunities and social mobility which hold individuals back, and bring heavy social and economic costs. Equality is central to building a strong economy and fairer society.

The Government believes that they need to reform education to tackle educational inequality, which has widened in recent years. They believe, 'that too many children are held back by disadvantage and discrimination ...and that the Equality Act gives us all an opportunity to do this in a more streamlined and effective way'.

This Plan sets out some of the ways in which, as a school, we are going to tackle inequality and promote equality, to raise standards and narrow gaps.

Section 3 School In context:

XII Apostles' is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School which serves the former Parishes of XII Apostles' and Our Lady of the Rosary.

Although the majority of children on roll are baptised Roman Catholics, the school admission policy allows for and welcomes children from other faiths.

The school is located within MSOA Wigan 027, an area characterised by high levels of socioeconomic disadvantage. XII Apostles is ranked within the 10–20% most deprived schools nationally (IMD 2019). ACORN data places most families in Category 5 (Urban Adversity), reflecting low household income, high reliance on benefits, lower educational attainment among adults, overcrowded or poor-quality housing, and greater prevalence of health inequalities. This picture is supported by the fact that 81% of pupils live in the bottom 30% of SOAs (IDACI), with 21% in the most deprived bands. The school's IDACI score (0.26) is well above both Wigan (0.18) and national (0.18) levels, placing the school in the bottom 20% nationally.

The proportion of pupils eligible for FSM6 has remained consistently close to national averages at around 32–33%; however, the immediate local area sits significantly higher at around 44%. Current FSM eligibility stands at 33% (June 2025), above both LA (30%) and national (25%) levels. Many families experience in-work poverty, typically within low-wage, insecure employment sectors such as retail, care work, and warehousing. Local child poverty

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levels remain high: 24.4% of children in West Leigh are living below 60% of the median household income (End Child Poverty 2024). Food insecurity is an increasing challenge, evidenced by the growing reliance on the school's free breakfast provision. Thirty-four percent of pupils appear on the Ever 6 register.

Wider deprivation indicators paint a similarly challenging picture. Wigan is the 67th most income-deprived authority nationally and 9th for employment deprivation. More than half of all households in Wigan & Leigh (53.4%) are deprived in at least one dimension (unemployment, health, education, overcrowding), and in some Leigh wards almost 54% of households experience health-related or housing-related deprivation. Housing instability and overcrowding impact children's sleep, wellbeing, and readiness to learn.

Two-thirds of Leigh communities fall within the top 25% most deprived nationally for health and wellbeing indicators, with 20.5% of residents claiming out-of-work benefits (above the borough average). Child poverty locally stands at 27.3%, above both borough (~23%) and national (~24%) averages. High deprivation levels directly affect access to enrichment opportunities and wider cultural capital, and many families rely on government and local authority initiatives targeted at the Leigh area.

Health inequalities are significant. Childhood obesity rates in the area exceed national levels (Reception 12.1%; Year 6 25.8%). Only 42–44% of children meet recommended physical activity levels. Dental health outcomes are poor, with 34% of 5-year-olds experiencing tooth decay (England average 23.7%). Mental health vulnerability is well above typical levels: around 13.4% of children in Wigan have a probable mental health disorder, with waiting times for CAMHS regularly exceeding 9–12 months. These extended delays place increased pressure on the school to support pupils' SEMH needs. High levels of domestic abuse, community antisocial behaviour, and police-reported incidents in West Leigh contribute to anxiety, instability, and safeguarding complexity for many children.

The school cohort reflects this stratified need. The proportion of pupils receiving SEN Support has been consistently close to national averages (14–16%), and remains lower than the local area, where SEN Support rates are well above average (20–22%). However, the number of pupils with EHCPs has risen steadily from close to average to above average (5.21% in 2025). As of November 2025, 24% of pupils are recorded as having SEND, including 11 pupils with EHCPs and 2 with EYAR. Fourteen percent of SEND pupils are categorised under SEMH, a rising trend affected by local delays in mental health services. This has had considerable financial and operational impact on the school.

The number of Children Looked After and Post-CLA remains higher than national levels, with 3 CLA and 7 Post-CLA pupils currently on roll. The proportion of pupils known to social care (CIN) has been well above national averages across the last three years (6.6–9%), closely reflecting the high level of need within the community.

The proportion of pupils with English as an Additional Language has risen year on year, currently close to national averages but above the local authority average. EAL rates have

increased from around 10–11% to 21% in 2025, with particularly high proportions in Early Years: projections indicate that EAL in Reception 2025 will be approximately 43%.

Section 4 Statement of Principles:

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At Twelve Apostles Catholic Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, socio economic background, or any other recognised area of discrimination.

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Teaching staff and Governors are public office-holders and are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. All members of the staff and Governing Body abide by the seven Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership to ensure equality for all.

Section 5 Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and the school improvement plan
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and ensures that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and reports progress to the governing body. The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

- The SLT have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues

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- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other and staff with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour

Section 6 Promoting Equality

Equality in our school:

- The school is committed to celebrating diversity and equality in many ways, in particular by recognising the uniqueness of every individual, as reflected in the Mission Statement.
- Good personal and community relations are actively promoted by fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all members of our community.
- Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.
- Information on ethnicity, gender, religion and disability is collected through the admissions process.
- Whole school systems emphasising praise, recognition and reward exist to promote and celebrate positive behaviour, sustained effort and hard work, contributions to the school community, and achievements outside school. We hold a celebration assembly to celebrate success on a weekly basis.
- We promote positive attitudes towards disabled people by having an open admissions policy and including all children in all activities.
- We promote positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups/religions
- We involve pupils, parents and staff in the life and work of the school, for example through involvement in community events, through our friends of Twelve Apostles parents' group
- We promote high expectations through celebrating achievement.
- We communicate behaviour expectations through modelling good behaviour and having a clear and explicit Behaviour Policy which is shared with pupils and parents.

Teaching and Learning:

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach their potential.

To do this, we:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we track pupil progress and identify under-performance, and provide support to individuals and groups of pupils. (see action plans in SIP)
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and SEND and action any gaps. –(see action plans in SEF)
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.

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- Ensure equality of access for all pupils
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and interests of all pupils
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Ensure that the school's Marking Policy promotes learning for all.
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance, for example through monitoring of data, recognising and awarding high attendance.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Use the no outsiders programme throughout school to teach children about protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Equality Act and supports schools' efforts to be inclusive and cohesive.

Supporting Learners with Particular Needs:

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs, the school:

- We prepare Personal Education Plans to focus on learning priorities for any child in care.
- Provide in-class TA support and intervention groups for all children identified through Provision Mapping.
- Arrange language support as required. The school employs its own speech and language therapist for one day a week
- Support vulnerable pupils through work with the Learning Mentor, the school Counsellor and mindfulness therapist.
- Provides appropriate training to enable staff to meet particular learning needs, such as training from School Nurse, TESS.
- Will draw on the expertise of outside professional services to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils. Adults in school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We will meet all pupils' learning needs by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- The school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration is given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

Recruitment of Staff

We will aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. The school's recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to the job and not disproportionate. The shortlisting of applicants will be done by more than one person wherever possible.

Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying. The school will take steps to ensure that vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which will only be used with HR's approval, such as:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.

- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

The school is required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents, e.g. a passport, before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, the school will monitor applicants' ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information will be voluntary and will not adversely affect an applicant's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before the shortlisting process, and will be kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps the school take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

Staff training and Promotion and Conditions of Service

Staff training needs and associated development opportunities will be identified through regular staff appraisals, in line with the school's Teacher Appraisal Policy and Support Staff Performance Management Policy. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit. The school will adopt good practice in terms of data collection and use this data to monitor and measure the attraction, recruitment, retention and progression of staff.

Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Disability Discrimination

The school will encourage staff who are disabled or become disabled to inform the headteacher about their condition so that the school can support them as appropriate.

Staff experiencing difficulties at work because of their disability (physical or otherwise) may wish to contact their line manager or the headteacher to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Their line manager or the headteacher may wish to consult with the staff member and a Occupational Health about possible adjustments.

The governing board will monitor the physical environment of the school premises to consider whether certain features place physically disabled staff, job applicants, service users, or other stakeholders at a substantial disadvantage compared to others. Where reasonable, the school will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

Section 7 Monitoring and Reviewing Equality

Twelve Apostles Primary School is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential. We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils. Using the analyses provided for us by the Local Authority and Raise-online.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information. School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances. As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Attendance
- Suspensions, exclusions and truancy
- Racism, homophobia and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in Extended Learning Opportunities

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

Section 8 Tackling Discrimination:

Bullying and harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation are unacceptable and are not tolerated within the school environment. All parents of new pupils receive a summary of the school's behaviour expectations and Anti-bullying Policy as part of an Induction Pack.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Headteacher where

necessary. All incidents should be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the Headteacher. All incidents are discussed with the Governors. Incidents are monitored to ensure that they are dealt with effectively.

Section 9 What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Bullying and harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Types of Discriminatory Incidents That Can Occur Are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference, for example food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Section 10 Responding to and reporting Incidents:

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and nonteaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school, and ensure that incidents are reported and addressed swiftly and effectively. The agreed procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

1. Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately
2. Inform Headteacher
3. Response to victim and family
4. Response to perpetrator and family

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5. Action taken to address issue with year group / school if necessary e.g. through circle time / assembly
6. Incident to be recorded on CPOMS .
7. Incidents to be reported to Governing Body.

Section 11 Developing Equality (Please see Equality Action Plan

Equality Objectives- Identifying Priorities

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school.

These will form the basis of the Equality Action Plan

- Knowledge of other cultures and faiths
- Children's understanding of racist and homophobic language
- School's physical environment- wheelchair accessible

Other areas of concern

- Special Educational Needs - above national
- Low-income backgrounds – pupil premium above national (low socio-economic background)
- Lack of life experiences
- Poor communication and language skills of children entering the Reception class

The school improvement plan further details actions to be taken to address inequalities in specific cohorts e.g. narrow the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, girls outperforming boy in writing in specific cohorts.

Section 12: Review of the progress of Policy and Action Plans:

The Plan has been agreed by the school community and our Governing Body. We recognise that the strength of this Policy depends upon ensuring that everyone is actively implementing it, and that gaps and the need for further development will arise from effective evaluation.

The SLT and Governing body are responsible for ensuring the policy is maintained and updated regularly and that actions procedures and strategies relating to the policy are implemented. Staff, pupils and parents will be consulted on how the policy is working and how it could be improved. All aspects of inclusion and equality will be reported via the school website and newsletters.

Section 13 Publishing the Action Plans:

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Single Equality Plan, we will:

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Publish our Plan on the school website

Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications

Make sure hard copies are available.

Section 14 Legal Framework and Linked Policies

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- SEND Code of Practice

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy
- Teacher Appraisal Policy
- Support Staff Performance Management Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with a Medical Condition

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

PSED requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.