



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

FOREWORD

Sunningdale School's Equality and Diversity policy outlines our commitment to integrate equality and diversity into all that we do and incorporates the statutory duties that we must meet as a school, an employer and a service provider. The policy details our vision to create environments where all people who are part of our school community feel comfortable and safe, and where the needs of that community are well understood and provided for. We believe that this policy will help us to meet our legislative responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity and we will strive to make improvements where these are identified; these are set out in our three year **Accessibility Action Plan/School Equality Profile and Equality Targets (SDP)**.

We see this policy and associated documentation as one that belongs to the whole school community, which is why we have consulted with a range of stakeholders, including staff, pupils, parents, governors and community groups. We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being fully inclusive and accessible and ultimately in providing a quality learning experience for all our children and young people.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates existing law into a single legal framework. It updates, simplifies and strengthens the previous legislation and provides a modern, accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The Equality Duty

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a new general public sector equality duty came into force in April 2011. This duty states that public bodies (which include schools), must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups
- The equality duty replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Who is protected under the Act

Schools have obligations under the Act as:

- Employers and bodies which carry out public functions, and service providers.

Therefore, Sunningdale School needs to make provision for the following groups of people:

- Employees

- Prospective pupils (in relation to admissions arrangements, for those schools who are the admitting authority)
- Pupils at the school (including those absent or temporarily excluded)
- Former pupils (if there is a continuing relationship based on them having been a pupil at the school)
- Families and groups who might use the school for community use.

Protected characteristics

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. The relevant characteristics are:

- The category of age, which is covered as part of the equality duty, does not apply to education and service provision in schools.
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Act as:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people).

The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from:

- Harassment, in relation to disability, race and sex, and victimisation.

A protected act is:

- making a claim or complaint of discrimination under the Act
- helping someone else make a claim by giving evidence or information
- making an allegation that the school or someone else has breached the Act
- doing anything else in connection with the Act.
- Pupils must not be victimised because their parent, sibling or friend has carried out a protected act. Schools must also not victimise parents who make complaints.

Positive action

The Act contains provisions which enable schools to take 'positive action', i.e.

provide additional benefits to pupils with protected characteristics, to address any disadvantage they may face. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination, which would be providing preferential treatment for a particular disadvantaged group of pupils, which exceeds the positive action conditions.

It is worth noting that it is never unlawful to treat disabled pupils (or applicants) more favourably than non-disabled pupils (or applicants). That is, a school is permitted to positively discriminate in favour of disabled pupils (applicants).

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

As a result of this policy we will ensure

- all members of the school community feels happy, safe and secure
- that equality of access exists for everyone
- the promotion of equality of opportunity regardless of the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, race, sexuality, gender, civil partnership, marriage, pregnancy and maternity.
- We actively develop the self-esteem and self respect of all members of the school community.
- That educational provision is relevant to our increasingly diverse society
- That the curriculum actively promotes equality of opportunity
- We challenge all forms of bullying, harassment, prejudice and stereotyping.
- The active engagement, support and commitment of the whole school community in achieving the above aims.

In order to achieve this school will devise a profile utilising the following information:

- Location/socio-economic profile
- numbers on roll
- numbers with LDD
- numbers from BME
- workforce information
- any other defining features (SEN)

for the following stakeholder groups:

- Pupils
- Employees
- Families
- Community groups (and promoting community cohesion)

GUIDELINES:

DISABILITY:

Pupils with special educational needs will

- Have complete access to all the facilities and resources available within school
- Receive support to ensure they reach their potential
- Have access to a broad balanced and relevant curriculum
- Be involved in the decision making about their care and education.

As a school we are committed to:

- Early identification, target setting and monitoring of all pupils
- Supporting gifted and talented pupils to ensure they reach their full potential
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that pupils benefit fully from their time spent in school
- Ensuring that staff take part regularly in relevant training

GENDER:

No matter what gender all pupils will

- Have access to the same learning opportunities
- Be expected to do as well as they possibly can
- Be expected to work towards displaying acceptable behaviour
- Be expected to work together in a constructive and positive manner
- Be discouraged from using stereotypical gender language.

As a school we will:

- Ensure that neither gender dominates to the detriment of the other
- Ensure that all resources portray both genders in a positive and non-stereotypical way.
- Continue to monitor achievement by gender. If differences based on gender appropriate action will be taken.

RACE:

- The curriculum will reflect the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally.
- Pupils will have opportunities to study issues linked with intolerance, prejudice, racism, racial discrimination and religious prejudice.
- Resources will portray members of local and regional cultural and ethnic groups in ways which are positive and non-stereotypical.
- All languages will be valued and promoted.
- All pupils will be able to dress and worship in ways which do not conflict with the cultural or religious conventions of the home.
- The dietary needs of all pupils will be met.
- Achievement, attendance and exclusions will be monitored by ethnicity. If differences are identified appropriate action will be taken.
- Members of all cultural and ethnic groups will be welcomed and valued by the school community.
- All racist incidents will be dealt with in an effective and consistent manner.
- When posts become vacant we will encourage applications from all groups within our increasingly diverse society.

RELIGION AND RACE:

- The curriculum will be used to value and celebrate diversity.
- Collective acts of worship will be used to promote equality of opportunity.
- All pupils will be given opportunities to meet their religious needs especially at the time of important festivals.
- The dietary needs of all pupils will be met.
- Resources will reflect a variety of religions and beliefs.
- Resources will reflect people of all religions and beliefs engaged in non-stereotypical roles and activities.
- People of all religions and beliefs will be encouraged to play an active role in school life.

AGE AND SEXUALITY:

- Staff will have high expectations of achievement and behaviour.
- All pupils will have access to all school resources and facilities.
- Resources will reflect people of all ages engaged in non-stereotypical roles and activities.
- Where appropriate the curriculum will be used to value and celebrate diversity based on age and sexuality.
- Collective worship will be used to promote equality of opportunity irrespective of age and sexuality.
- People of all ages and sexuality will be welcomed and valued.

GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT, CIVIL PARTNERSHIP & MARRIAGE & MATERNITY:

- In relation to the above 'protected' characteristics all stakeholders will be welcomed and valued as individuals and their 'rights' respected as defined in legislation.

- Appropriate use will be made of external support services to ensure that equality of opportunity exists in relation to the above characteristics.

Responsibility for ensuring that the school does not breach the Equality Act

- The School's Governing Body is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Equality Act is not breached. It must take all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation from taking place, and the detailed action plan accompanying this scheme sets out how we will do this.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school complies with all relevant equality legislation
- Ensuring that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed
- Making sure that the school Equality Scheme clearly outlines how it will deal with issues faced by the identified 'protected groups'
- Producing regular information for all staff and governors about the scheme and how it is working.
- Making sure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the scheme and arranging any training and support needed
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying and bullying related to gender or disability.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist, homophobic and other hate incidents
- Being able to recognise bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equal opportunities and good race relations
- Avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability or gender
- Keeping up to date with laws on discrimination
- Taking up training and learning opportunities.
- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for dealing with bullying, hate-incidents or discrimination.
- Headteachers and staff are responsible for ensuring that visitors and contractors are aware of and adhere to the Schools Single Equality Scheme.

How we will meet our responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act

In order to meet its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act the school has undertaken Equality Impact Assessments on all of our policies, plans, projects and functions. These assessments have allowed us to identify barriers to achieving equality for all and eliminate all forms of discrimination in a school setting. As a result of the assessments, a three-year **Accessibility Action Plan** and identified **Equality targets** linked to the school SDP (School Development Plan) have been devised setting out the school's priorities for improvements, including actions, timescales and responsible officers. The plans are designed to improve outcomes for children, families, staff and community groups using the school, who may be disadvantaged because of inequality.

We will monitor the actions developed through the Equality Impact Assessments regularly, and will review the plans annually.

Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it need to be informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education
- Pupil Voice through the PLP.
- Feedback at Governing body meetings
- Community groups.
- Monitoring and reviewing the action plan

This is a three year scheme and action plan running from 2014-17 However, we will monitor the equality information used to inform the action plan and the outcomes resulting from it annually through the Equality Group who will be responsible for

- Monitoring the Plan
- Publishing and promoting the Scheme

The policy and associated documentation (Accessibility Plan & Equality Targets) have been agreed by the school's Governing Body and will be published in the following ways:

- Copies will be made available to all staff and governors
- Copies will be displayed in public areas of the school, i.e. reception and community rooms, for parents/carers to use
- The policy and associated documentation will be published on the school's website