

Equality Policy

Reviewed: Sept 2015

Next review: Sept 2018 with Single Equality Scheme

Background

The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act. The Act protects individuals from discrimination and harassment based on the following 'protected characteristics':

- Disability
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex and sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity.

The Act sets out a duty to:

- Eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Equality Policy

Our single Equality Policy sets out how we aim to address our responsibilities under the 2010 Act in relation to the whole school community and any others who have access to our school. The policy reflects the young age of our pupils and our responsibility to ensure age-appropriate actions. It brings together all previous policies and schemes in relation to disability equality and racial equality and is closely associated with our policies on Equal Opportunity, behaviour management, anti-bullying and Special Educational Needs.

The Equality Policy is the basis for the development of the school's Single Equality Scheme. The Scheme describes how we will carry out and monitor our duty under the Act with realistic and measurable targets to assess the effectiveness of our actions. This Scheme must be published at least every four years.

School Context

Ashley School is situated in the heart of Walton-on-Thames. We have recently expanded to become a two-form entry school. We took an additional class of 30 reception children in September 2015 and we anticipate this to be the start of further development to become a three-form entry school.

The design of our new single-storey classroom blocks fulfil the current regulations for providing for those with physical disabilities as well as for those with other special needs.

The original school building is Victorian with a 1990s extension. It is all single storey with ramps at entrances and exits as necessary. Provision in this building for those with physical disabilities has been improved.

Should we become a three-form entry school, a two-storey extension to the original Victorian building is anticipated which will need to comply with regulations for children with disabilities..

On site, there is an all-weather level playground adjacent to the school buildings and a very large playing field all on the level. Parking space for those with disabilities is provided in the staff car park.

Currently there are 450 pupils on the role. The majority of children (82.4%) are of white British ethnicity and, of the others, 5.8% are non-white and 11.8% of mixed race. There are 22 children (4.9%) where English is not their first language.

40 children have special educational needs and of these 12 are statemented. Five pupils qualify for the *Pupil Premium*, and a further seven for *Ever 6*. There is one service child. Absenteeism is very low - less than 4%.

Aims and values

As a Church of England Academy, we have created and are committed to maintaining an ethos that ensures equal opportunity for all and encourages a positive attitude of respect and understanding towards others whatever their background. We seek to provide a high quality education for every member of our community, regardless of gender, race, religion, language, age or ability. In carrying out the general duty of the Act, our aim is to ensure that we provide opportunities for every individual working within this school community to achieve their full potential.

In addition, we aim to:

- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society and world
- Enable pupils to develop a respect for linguistic, cultural and religious diversity, and for those with disabilities
- Develop pupils' own sense of personal and cultural identity, whilst encouraging them to be receptive and respectful towards other cultural identities
- Make our school a place where everyone, irrespective of their background, gender and ability feels welcome and valued
- Acknowledge that racism exists and take active measures to tackle it and eliminate racial discrimination whatever form it might take
- Ensure that the curriculum challenges stereotyping through the positive use of relevant resources (e.g. puppets, stories etc.)
- Ensure that equality is an integral part of all planning and decision-making within the school

This policy is applicable to others working in or visiting the school as well as to our school community.

Policy, planning and review

The school will ensure that equality principles and procedures above inform all policy making and practice, especially in the following key areas:

- Pupil progress, attainment and assessment, including monitoring in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability
- Pupil behaviour, discipline procedures and exclusions
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and learning
- Admissions and attendance
- Curriculum content and coverage
- Staff recruitment and professional development
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community

Monitoring and evaluation

- The school monitors the progress of all pupils through its tracking and assessment procedures which reports to the Governors' Curriculum, Learning and Progress Committee. If there are any incidents of racial or any other abuse, these will be recorded formally and presented to the Governors' Resources Committee and included in the headteacher's report to the Local Governing Body (LGB) each term.
- The headteacher and leadership team will work with other statutory bodies and County to assess and monitor the specific need of each child/staff member with a special need or disability to ensure that the appropriate resources are provided for the child/staff member and their family.
- Each pupil will have individually-tailored learning challenges with achievable targets to monitor their progress.
- The LGB will support the headteacher, SENCO and all staff in providing the necessary resources to improve the provision of information to those with disabilities and other needs.
- All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities within the scheme for a particular child and be given the appropriate training for their role.
- Parents and carers will be encouraged to play an active part in the learning challenges and other school activities. Their feedback will be used to help assess the effectiveness of the school's actions and adjustments made as necessary.

Review

The Equality Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Safeguarding Advisory Group prior to formal approval by the whole Governing Body via the CLP Committee. It will be circulated to all staff and made available to the whole school community through the school website.

The Single Equality Scheme will be reviewed/updated every three years or as the need arises. Subsequent objectives and accompanying information will be published at least every four years.