

Rothbury First School

Published equality information about the context of our school

This is our published data (April 2016) about our school population and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics.

The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by proficiency in English.

We are a small first school with 107 (135 including nursery) children on roll. This number fluctuates with 3 nursery intakes over an academic year. The school's rurality means that some children have limited access to services such as sports facilities and the theatre or cinema. There are pockets of disadvantage alongside privilege.

Teaching and learning is focused upon engaging and responding to the needs of all pupils, and engaging harder to reach groups

At the moment most of the pupils speak English as their first language. When we require support for an EAL pupil, we draw upon the expertise of the County Council's EAL support teacher.

Fewer than 2% of the current cohort of pupils represent minority ethnic groups, compared with 30.7% nationally. There are no significant patterns of under-achievement in our BME population.

Our disadvantaged pupils in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium Grant are reported on as a discrete group in order to demonstrate the effect of the PPG funding on raising achievement equally for all groups. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance, ensuring high quality teaching and learning, and access to our best qualified staff for our most disadvantaged learners.

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals are given a high priority, although financial disadvantage is not a protected characteristic, it is a significant priority for schools.

We are aware of some differences in outcomes based on gender. Each year group is monitored and any differences are picked up quickly. In February 2016, governors evaluated equalities across the school and defined some objectives to address equality of outcome based on gender. We represent, discuss and celebrate cultural diversity through a diversity project and reflect the positive aspects of difference. Our leadership team has started to address the impact of resources and displays, letters home and the language we use to establish that we are LGBT inclusive and that gender stereotyping is challenged.

We recognise the growing numbers of gender variant pupils in schools and staff are aware of the issues to be addressed in becoming trans-inclusive. These include practical

considerations such as a gender-neutral uniform list (which we have), identifying gender neutral toilets (which we have) and changing facilities, and emotional and social support for pupils who transition or express gender variance.

Our school uniform policy is flexible and the guidance does not discriminate against any child on the basis of gender, race, disability, gender identity or belief.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need.

Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who are on the SEND register.

A small minority of pupils have communication issues. We address this through targeted support and staff training. Staff are trained in BSL, Makaton, attachment and emotional literacy.

Currently none of the pupils are supported with a statement or EHC plan.

The school is an accessible building, with flat access, accessible toilets in nursery and the dining room and wheelchair accessible routes.

The school uses data on inequalities of outcome and involvement when setting itself objectives for achievable and measurable improvements. These are outlined in the school's accessibility plan, development plan and at the end of this published information.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying, and we tackle these in accordance with the County Council's recently revised guidance for dealing with discriminatory incidents and hate crime. In the past we have recorded and reported only racist incidents to the Local Authority and worked in a responsive, constructive way with the neighbourhood policing team and Community Engagement Officer to resolve this issue to everyone's satisfaction.

All staff have face to face WRAP training scheduled for autumn 2016 and recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We recognise the vulnerability of some people in our region to messages about far right extremism, and welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions, and will address this through staff training in October 2016.

We recognise the limited opportunities many of our children have to experience the wider UK and urban contexts that exist outside Northumberland and prioritise a programme of learning including visits and visitors to address this. A recent audit of SMSC across the curriculum has prompted us to give a greater focus to learning about religion and belief during an annual RE week.

The school does not record data about religion in SIMS. The village is predominantly Christian in nature. We welcome visits from the local United Reformed Church. We hope to extend this to cover a broader range of religious leaders and representatives.

Documentation and record-keeping

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy which is published to the web site.

The school aims to extend children's understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the work we do on promoting friendship, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults.

Responsibilities

A senior member of staff has special responsibility for anti-discriminatory work across the school.

Staffing

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.

Behaviour and safety

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

The school annually returns a report on the number of racist incidents to the Local Authority.

Surveys and focus groups show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

Curriculum

Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils with protected characteristics. There is extra or special provision for certain groups, which changes as appropriate.

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding. Following the recent governor equalities walk and a noticeable increase in the use of terms such as 'firemen' or 'policeman' by the children, we recognise the need to do more work to challenge gender stereotypes.

There are activities across the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the help them to embody values and develop character traits such as resilience, determination, perseverance and optimism.

Consultation and involvement

The school has procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school, and has regard in these for the concerns of the Equality Act.

Part Two: Objectives

Narrowing gaps

1.Action: We have year groups with a number of pupils who have a combination of protected characteristics and vulnerabilities which contribute to a significant gap in attainment and progress between them and other children (boys, eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant, on the SEND register and writing in the early years. Girls and higher level mathematics as they near the upper year groups in school). We intend to initiate a range of evidence-based interventions and targeted support which will enable us to see the pupils' attainment increase to bring them at least in line with their peers.

Actions and expect impact

The school will annually review and define which packages are our most effective in terms of cohort, characteristic and identified need.

This information will be shared among the whole staff and governing body and published on the school website

The gap will narrow in line with national expectations for all of our disadvantaged pupils, relative to their starting points, with a specific focus on younger boys and writing and older girls and maths

2. Action: The school intends to develop teaching and learning resources and interaction with role models that challenge some outdated gender stereotypes which have recently become apparent. From September 16, there will be a part time male class teacher in school.

We will work to introduce both boys and girls to role models and situations that challenge misconceptions and stereotypes about gender and aspiration.

Actions and expected impact:

Increased awareness of equality and aspiration articulated by staff and pupils

Willingness to challenge discriminatory thoughts and practices.

Increased understanding of the roles and responsibilities experienced by role models who will be drawn from all sectors of the community and include LGBT and minority ethnic people.

Children will articulate an increased awareness of how to get to occupy positions in life and in work that they may previously have perceived to be unattainable

Fostering Good Relations

3. Our audit of Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural education in the curriculum highlighted that we still have more to do if we wish to say that we are fully inclusive of children who have (as many do) increased family diversity and diverse caring arrangements.

Actions and expected impact

A conscious decision to represent and talk openly about more diverse family circumstances (same sex parents, grandparents, foster carers, single parent families) will build resilience and confidence in children who will be able to see that we recognise and celebrate difference.

The impact of this work will be visible in displays, resources, conversations and the ability of our pupils to articulate that family diversity is visible and welcomed in school.

Children will respond confidently and with tolerance when asked 'Do you learn about children who have two mums or two dads?' or 'Is this a safe place to talk about having two mums or two dads?'

4. We recognise that we may contribute to a relatively monocultural perception of religion, worship and belief through the opportunities we are able to offer for children to have first hand experiences that represent the wider mosaic of religion, worship and belief that exists in modern Britain.

We plan to extend the learning and interactions children have to give them better preparation for life in modern Britain in contexts more diverse than Rothbury.

We expect children to articulate increased knowledge as well as tolerance, understanding and mutual respect.

Pupils will better understand the concept of 'Britishness' in the wider UK context.

These objectives replace the previous equality objectives set in April 2011.

Progress against the objectives will be reviewed annually, and they will remain our objectives until April 2020, when they are due to be refreshed