



Russell Street School

## Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Russell Street School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

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

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

35% of children come from out of area. 25% of children come from areas of deprivation around the edges of the town. As a result we have a very comprehensive intake. We have a strong commitment to ensuring successful learning outcomes for all children. 6% of children have English as an additional language and 13% are from ethnic minorities. 25 children are on the SEND monitoring list, 10 have personalised plans, 3 have EHC plans. 15% of children in KS1 are eligible for Pupil Premium. 13% of children in Reception are eligible for Pupil Premium. We have 4 looked after children.

### Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

### Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

### We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality

- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

### **Our vision Statement**

Russell Street School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

### **Our duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.

**We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.**

**These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.**

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- assessment arrangements
- behaviour management approach and consequences
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities

- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

### **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are part of the School Development Plan
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the scheme
- evaluate and review this scheme every two years

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the SDP

Our pupils/students will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

### **How we developed our Policy - Engagement and Involvement**

The development of this scheme has involved the whole of our school community. We've engaged with them and listened to what they have to say including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010

- Our pupils through 'Children's Voices' and individual interviews
- Our staff through equality questionnaires and staff meetings
- Our school governors through equality questionnaires and committee meetings
- Parents/carers through questionnaires
- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups through targeted interviews
- Our partners in the community through meetings (EYFS Hub)
- Ongoing: annual questionnaires and meetings

### **How we develop our Policy**

We regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways:

RAISE shows us that our vulnerable groups, boys and girls perform better than national averages. We continue to work on the performance of boys in writing to raise this further and to close the gap with the attainment of girls.

OFSTED inspectors / School Improvement Partner visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. In our latest OFSTED report it states that the school provides well for disabled pupils.

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender. They show that currently we have no bullying or harassment issues related to equality.

We also complete a Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) which means we are constantly monitoring the make-up and needs of our staff and pupils/students – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice. Children have the opportunity to express their views half-termly in Children's Voices, sample interviews are carried out annually for each subject area and by our SENCO. Parents contribute through an annual questionnaire, by posting ideas into our collection box, talking to Governors at parent's' evenings and during half termly coffee mornings with the Headteacher.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We work closely with our SEND, our Speech Therapist, our school nurse, and with the Family Practices team.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required. Our local partners include the EYFS Hub, liaison group of schools, Town Council, sports groups and churches.

### **Commissioned services (buying in services)**

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

### **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

The Headteacher has undertaken training to help her understand her equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

### **Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

### **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy will be actively promoted and disseminated through our website and newsletters.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these within the detailed action plan.

We will report annually on the policy through the School evaluation Form and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

### Equality Objectives

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff and community and analysis of the information as outlined above we have developed an action plan that sets specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed annually.

Task	Actions
<p><b>Teaching and Learning</b> Continued monitoring of the Provision Map and its impact for children with protected characteristics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review of each Wave of the Provision Map, referring to tracking, intervention monitoring and pupil feedback.</li> <li>• Plan updated to maximise gains for all groups</li> </ul>
Continued embedding of inclusive practice in Quality First Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training: observation of good practice</li> <li>• Appraisal focus on improving teaching and learning for vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
Continued employment of Numbers Count and Reading Recovery teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review effectiveness of teachers for including children with SEND</li> <li>• Annual budget to allow for continued provision</li> </ul>
Evaluate levels of children's well-being and use these to improve provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Termly monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>• Plans in place to ensure high levels of involvement and well-being for all groups across the school day.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policies:</b> All school policies due for review to be informed by the equality policy and objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To compile list of policies for review and timescale</li> <li>• To consult relevant government and local requirements and guidelines</li> <li>• To seek input from rest of staff where appropriate</li> <li>• To share amendments in staff meetings and with Governors</li> <li>• To evaluate against equality objectives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attainment and data:</b> Continue to interrogate Baseline, tracking data, RAISE, EYFSP to ensure effective provision and attainment for all pupils and particularly those with protected characteristics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Termly staff meeting to interrogate tracking data</li> <li>• Plans and provision for vulnerable groups to be timely and effective</li> <li>• RAISE data to be interrogated and vulnerable groups to be identified, actions planned and put in place</li> </ul>