



Chantry Community Primary School

# Equality & Accessibility Policy & Plan

June 2016

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Tis Equality Policy for Chantry Community Primary School brings together schemes and action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, meeting the statutory duties in these areas. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act, 2010 (Faith and Religion, Age, Sex and Sexual Orientation). See Appendix A: Key Legislation. However, it goes far beyond these strands to include sexuality, religion & faith, age and every aspect which has the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community such as against those with special educational needs or potential language barriers. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aims of the Every Child Matters agenda (see overleaf) and these have informed and shaped this document.

We will continue to have an Equality Objectives Plan along with a Special Educational Needs Policy. This Policy will replace the Racial Equality Policy, the Equal Opportunities Policy and include Gender and Disability Equality.

Our equality scheme is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies can address discrimination, promote inclusive practice and ensure that those in our community requiring extra support receive it.

This scheme will be monitored annually, its impact measured against identified outcomes and reviewed every three years.

### **Our school within the wider context**

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

Chantry Community Primary School is an average size school, 210 pupils currently on roll, and sits in the middle of a residential area of a seaside town on the south coast of England. 23.8% of children are eligible for free school meals and we have a very small number of ethnic minority children, 6.8%. Our number of children with special educational needs is below the national average at 6.2%. Only two children have English as an additional language. The stability of children is above the national average at 92.8% as is our deprivation indicator at .26. 91.7% of our children are from white British backgrounds. Although very slightly, our percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups has increased over the last three years as has our deprivation indicator.

### **Overall aims of our scheme**

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

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life, the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which includes recognition of educational, wellbeing and material outcomes such as those which are part of the Every Child Matters Agenda.

Issues related to adults in the school community are embraced under these themes and will be reflected in Action Plans.

## **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. Underlying our diversity lies commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs. 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

It is our vision for all involved in Chantry to welcome all members of the community and respect and support each other. We aim to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning through all we do, along with teaching the pupils about British Values. Our complete Vision for Chantry Community School can be found both in the school prospectus and the Staff Handbook.

We encourage children at Chantry 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 duties and responsibilities 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. They are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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 participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children and young people and their parents through linking with other schools
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- 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 Theatre in Education (TIE).
- 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 informed about the Equality Scheme
- 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 (SLT) 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 Scheme
- ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- inform and consult with parents 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 scheme
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the SIP

### **Our pupils will:**

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

### **Our parents/carers will:**

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

### **Our school staff will:**

- be involved in the ongoing development of the scheme
- 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 Scheme
- make known any queries or training requirements

### **How we developed our policy – Participation and Involvement**

The development of the original scheme involved Governors and Parents from our school community and we have consulted with Staff and children. We formed a working party of parents and Governors who represent our school community.

- Our pupils were consulted through the PSHE curriculum and through interviews with Governors.

- Our staff were all asked to read the policy and comment on any amendments that were identified.
- Our school governors were involved in writing the policy.
- Our parents were represented on the Disability Access working party and were then asked to read the policy and comment.
- The policy was then placed on the School website and parents were invited to comment.
- For the first two years of the policy the working party continued to meet and monitor the policy.

### **How we developed our Policy – Using Information**

The wide range of information gathered to support out planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- Identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different equality strands. This helps us develop and monitor the policy. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- Pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- Children and young people’s views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- Information about how different groups access the whole curriculum
- Sports and activity choices of all groups;
- Uptake of extended schools offer by group;
- Attendance and exclusions data analysed by group;
- Records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- Data on recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- Outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion.

### **How we identify actions attached to the scheme and prioritise them**

We know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender. Our action plan directly reflects this consultation.

We 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 mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

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 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.

Our school is part of a well-established Alliance of schools, consisting of eight primary schools, one independent special school and two secondary schools. We have strong links with both the local Church of England Church and the local Baptist Church. We work closely with the local Primary Care Trust, Children's Centres and Social Care Agencies.

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. We can set objectives and assess the effectiveness of the actions we take.

### **Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

We use this tool as a common sense measure of determining whether a policy, practice or project will impact on all groups equally or whether it may potentially have a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). It helps us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and those positive duties are promoted equally. It is a way to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils and staff and that diversity, equalities and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

### **Commissioned services (procurement)**

Increasingly, we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services such as maintenance, cleaning and security. We work closely with the local authority on procurement to ensure that equality issues are given full regard.

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 (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) 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.

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.

We have installed a fully accessible toilet and additional ramps to ensure the whole building is accessible to pupils and adults with physical disabilities.



## **Responding to equality-related incidents**

We recognise that equality-related or prejudice-based bullying behaviour are 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, ageism or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

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 have a legal obligation to collate and report racist incidents. We and the County Council 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, working in partnership with colleagues from other agencies.

## **Monitoring and reviewing**

This policy has been updated from the original policy that was developed in 2012. Once it is agreed by our Governors it will be published on the school's website. We will report annually on the policy 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. Data relating to children's progress, including the progress of vulnerable groups, is collected and analysed for trends in Term 6 each year. The information is shared with Governors at a full governing body meeting in Term 1 and is then available on request from the school office.

Signed: .....(Chair of Governors)      Date: .....

Signed: .....(Headteacher)      Date: .....

## Appendix 1

### Accessibility Plan Background

Chantry Community Primary School is housed in a Victorian building with a 1970s hall extension. It is situated on a sloping site that necessitates numerous sets of stairs. These stairs are internal and external. During more recent developments, external slopes have been added to improve access. This includes the new extension for the Reception and Yr 1 classrooms.

KS2 Classrooms are accessible from the outside with one step over the threshold of the fire door.

The school hall is accessible from the inside down two small flights of stairs. From the outside it is accessible via a sloping pathway or steps.

KS2 pupils can only access toilet facilities via steps (or externally via a slope).

Stairs are fitted with hand-rails apart from leading down to KS2 toilets & Rainbow room.

### **Recent Building work**

All recent building work e.g.

- New extension for Yr R, Yr 1, Senco's office
- Kitchen
- Library area

have been considered in the light of accessibility e.g. ramps/space

### **Accessible Toilet**

A fully accessible toilet is situated at the end of the building.

### **Problems not yet occurred but would be difficult to solve**

*Staff/Pupils with a mobility problem would have difficulties accessing:*

- Hall from inside
- Toilet facilities for KS2 children from inside
- Year 2 classroom

*Staff with a mobility problem would have difficulties accessing:*

- Staff Room

It would be very difficult to build ramps to facilitate a wheelchair; however, some areas could be accessed via an external route.

Accessibility is considered in advance of children starting school. In particular for each September intake for the Reception class. Meetings have been held for children starting in September 2016 and provision to meet children's needs will be in place for their individual start dates.

### Appendix 3: Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist (to be completed before a disabled child attends Chantry, on an individual basis)

This list will help identify barriers to access that exist in school. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to support a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of our school.

#### Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?		
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?		
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?		
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?		
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?		
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?		
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?		
Are there high expectations of all pupils?		
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?		

## Appendix 4: Key Legislation

Area	Legislation
All equality strands	Equality Act 2010
Age	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Disability	Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Gender	Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006 Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
Race	Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
Religion or belief	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006
Sexual orientation	Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006

### Equality Act 2010

#### Equality Act 2010

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

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

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

Further duties for schools will be implemented in April 2011 with the introduction of the Single Public Sector Equality Duty. Until this commences schools must continue with their existing duties in relation to race, disability and gender as set out below.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-guidance-for-education-providers-schools/>

### **Race - Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**

#### **General duties**

- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote good relations between people of different racial groups

#### **Specific duties**

- To prepare a written race equalities policy
- To implement the policy
- To monitor and evaluate the policy's impact

### **Disability - Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the SEN framework set out in the Education Act 1996, and extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 to cover the provision of education. Since 2002, three sets of duties have combined to provide the statutory framework that underpins equality of opportunity for disabled pupils in accessing school education. The duties around discrimination, planning, SEN and promotion of equalities combine to provide the statutory framework underpinning equality of opportunity for disabled pupils.

Funding is available to help schools comply with accessibility and planning.

## **General duties**

- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- To encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- To take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

## **Specific duties**

- To prepare and publish a disability equality scheme
- To involve disabled people in the development of a scheme
- To implement the scheme
- To report on the scheme annually
- To review the scheme every three years
- To develop an accessibility plan

## **Accessibility planning**

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into the Disability Equality Scheme. Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Disability Equality Scheme. A comprehensive Access Resource Pack to support schools with accessibility has been developed by the Development Planning Team at ESCC and sent out to all schools. Schools should contact Darren Guyett (01273 481314) if they require a copy.

## **Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006**

### **General duty**

- To promote community cohesion

### **Specific duties**

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

## **Gender - Equality Act 2006**

### **General duties**

- To take action to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination between men and women
- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women including transgender people.

### **Specific duties**

- To publish a gender equalities scheme with agreed gender equalities action
- To ensure equal pay by gender
- To gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality
- To consult stakeholders and use that information to identify objectives
- To implement identified actions within three years and to report annually on the scheme

### **Sexual orientation**

#### **The Equality Act 2006 (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007**

The regulations make it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their sexual orientation:

- In the terms on which it offers to admit him or her as a pupil or to accept him or her as a member of staff
- By refusing to accept an application either to admit him or her as a pupil or as a member of staff
- In the way in which any member of the school community is afforded access to any benefit, facility or service
- By refusing access to any benefit, facility or service
- By excluding, suspending or dismissing him or her
- By subjecting him or her to any other detriment

Discrimination is unlawful in civil law rather than being an offence.

### **Religion or belief**

#### **The Equality Act 2006 Part 2: Discrimination on Grounds of Religion or Belief**

The Act provides that schools (unless in relation to certain exempted areas which are expanded on in *Appendix D*) will not be allowed to admit or refuse to admit pupils on the basis of religion or belief; and must treat pupils equally, irrespective of their own or their parents' religion or belief or lack of it. Furthermore, the Act makes illegal either direct discrimination (by treating a person less favourably on the grounds of their religion or belief) or indirect discrimination through the application of a provision, criterion or practice which, although it is applied equally to everybody, puts people of a particular religion or belief at a disadvantage. These regulations apply to both adults and young people within the school community. To enable faith schools to continue to operate in accordance with their particular religious ethos, limited exceptions to the non-discrimination provisions have been introduced. There are also exemptions relating to the curriculum and collective worship. Go to [www.governor.net.co.uk](http://www.governor.net.co.uk) for more detail, including examples of best practice.

## **Age - The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006**

The Regulations came into force on 1 October 2006 and provide protection for all age groups: young, old and middle-aged. They provide four key areas of protection: direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

**Direct Age Discrimination:** This amounts to less favourable treatment on the grounds of an individual's age, which can be a person's actual or perceived age.

**Indirect Age Discrimination:** The Regulations protect those who suffer from discrimination as a result of the application of a criteria, policy rule or practice, which although applied to all employees, has the effect of disadvantaging people of a particular age. An example here is the criminal statement that an applicant must have 15 years' experience, which disadvantages younger people.

**Harassment and Victimisation:** In addition to compliance with these regulations, schools can support their duty to promote community cohesion by ensuring that volunteers and visitors (including those invited to enrich the curriculum) are representative of all ages, including older people. They should ensure that all parents/carers and visitors are aware of and able to uphold the school's equal opportunities policy.



