

# St Helen's Church of England Primary School



## Equality Policy

**Approved by:** Governing Body **Date:**

**Last reviewed on:** January 2023

**Next review due by:** January 2025

This Equality Policy for St. Helen's Church of England Primary School brings together previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those previously developed 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.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – children, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies.

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
- foster good relations between groups.

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

### **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.

### **Legislation and Guidance**

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

### **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:

- 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.
- “No Outsiders” – everyone is welcome.

### **Our vision statement about Equality**

St. Helen’s Church of England Primary 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 strapline embraces this policy



### **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

- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of children for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of children
- home learning
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare
- global links
- the explicit teaching of tolerance as a British value

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

#### **The governing body will:**

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, children and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher

#### **The Head Teacher will:**

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and children
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

#### **The Classroom Staff will:**

- Teach a balanced and fair curriculum that challenges knowledge and promotes understanding
- Support every individual to achieve highly and progress well from their individual starting points
- Promote a culture of mutual trust and support where everyone feels valued, comfortable and listened to in all aspects of school life, including when sharing concerns or worries, no matter how small
- Work effectively with a range of people who support our children eg. parents, medical colleagues and education support staff, to maximise potential and to overcome barriers to progress

#### **The Whole Staff Group will:**

- Promote equality and inclusivity
- Lead by example

## **The Children will:**

- Be encouraged, taught and supported to understand one another and to accept respect and celebrate individual difference
- Be encouraged and supported to include everyone
- Be reminded of what to do if someone is unkind to another person in order to effectively support one another

## **Participation and Involvement**

We will involve and listen to what our community 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.

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 unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work.

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.

## **Equality Objectives**

Analysis of the information as outlined above means that we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty.

These will be reviewed every year.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty statements**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. Protected characteristics
- The Equality Duty covers: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The duty to have due

regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnerships.

## **ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. accessibility issues for children with disabilities, or gay children/staff who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim children to pray at prescribed times where possible)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all children to be involved in the full range of school activities)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Collate attainment data each academic year showing how children with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups where issues have been identified (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own children

## **MONITORING**

The Head Teacher will update the equality information we publish at least every year.

This Equality Objectives (Action Plan) document will be reviewed by Finance and Personnel Committee at least every 4 years.

This policy will be approved by FP Committee and/or Full Governing Body at least every two years.



## APPENDIX A

### EQUALITY OBJECTIVES ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2027

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other evidence. Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages. We will regularly review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives.

Objectives and Actions	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timing	Impact (when reviewed)
To address any inequalities that have become apparent for cohorts, groups or individuals as a result of the pandemic and periods of school closure or absence	Review after each assessment period	Head Teacher	March 2023/July 2023	
	Pupil Progress meetings	Deputy Head Teacher	March 2023/July 2023	
	Review after intervention programmes/updates of provision maps	Class Teachers	April 2023/July 2023	
		Support Staff	Subsequent data drops	
Promote 'Learn to love, Loving to learn' for all by ensuring that nobody is disadvantaged by any of the protected characteristics	Monitor attainment data at key intervals (taking into account gender, socio-economic background (FSM) and ethnicity) and take any necessary action to minimise any gaps which might exist	Head Teacher	March 2023/July 2023	
		Deputy Head Teacher	March 2023/July 2023	
			April 2023/July 2023	
			Subsequent data drops	
Ensure tolerance and respect towards individuals	Ensure regular analysis of any negative	Head Teacher	Ongoing	

<p>who identify with any of the protected characteristics</p>	<p>behaviour incidents to identify any patterns related to protected characteristics, e.g. racism, and ensure any necessary action is taken to mitigate this, e.g. further education, involvement of parents/carers etc</p> <p>Utilise collective worship opportunities to promote equality and diversity and to tackle issues of discrimination or oppression for any protected groups</p> <p>Respond to world news/current affairs issues (related to any individuals/protected characteristics) through Collective Worship or PSHE sessions</p>	<p>Deputy Head Teacher</p> <p>RE Lead</p> <p>PSHE Lead</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
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## APPENDIX B

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION & GUIDANCE

Part Two Our Legal Duties Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010. This legislation covers employment (work), the provision of services and public functions, and education. Employers (schools) are liable for discriminatory acts of their employees if they did not take reasonable steps to prevent such acts. Employees can be liable for acts (where an employer took reasonable steps to prevent such acts).

The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are:

- **Age** – A person of a particular age (e.g. 32 year old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- **Disability** – A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
- **Gender reassignment** – A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment.
- **Marriage and civil partnership** – Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- **Pregnancy and maternity** – Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.
- **Race** – A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
- **Religion and belief** – Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
- **Sexual orientation** – A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a 10 primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils. It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated. So, for example, a school must not discriminate by refusing to admit a pupil because his parents are gay men or lesbians. It would be race discrimination to treat a white pupil less favourably because she has a black boyfriend.

## **'Prohibited Conduct' (acts that are unlawful)**

- **Direct discrimination** Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** A provision, criteria or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Harassment** Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating a intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.
- **Victimisation** Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a complaint) brought in connection with this Act.
- **Discrimination arising from disability** Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments.
- **Gender re-assignment discrimination** Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purpose of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision such as sick leave).
- **Pregnancy/maternity related discrimination** Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a woman or girl because she is breastfeeding.
- **Discrimination by association or perception** For example, discriminating against someone because they "look gay", or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative. Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

## **Public Sector Duties (applies to schools)**

A school must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to (in relation to protected characteristics above):

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
  2. Advance equality of opportunity (remove or minimise disadvantage; meet people's needs; take account of disabilities; encourage participation in public life).
  3. Foster good relations between people (tackle prejudice and promote understanding).
- In practice, 'due regard' means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty, so decision makers in schools must have due regard when making a decision, in developing a policy or taking an action as to whether it may have implications for people because of their protected characteristics.

## **Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans**

Schools are required to:

Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example:

- Steps and lifts. Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.
- Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) an Accessibility Plan to:

1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum

2. Improve the physical environment

3. Improve provision of information.

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The school will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the relevant admissions authority as appropriate