



**St Helens Primary School**

# **Equalities Policy**

Reviewed by: FGB

On: December 2022

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Chair of Governors: Gary Booth

Signature: *Gary Booth*

# St Helens Primary School

## Single Equalities Policy

### Document Information

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Author:	This version updated from IW Council original document July 2020 P. Rainford, M. Searle, C. Wake
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## **Statement / principles**

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for identified groups and individuals of students, staff, parents/carers, governors and visitors in school, ensuring that there is equality of access and celebrating and valuing the legacy and strengths within the school.

We believe that equality at our school should filter through all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At St Helens Primary, equality is a key principle for treating people with dignity and respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation as recognised protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

This policy has been drawn up as a result of discussion between different stakeholders.

## **Monitoring and review**

The responsibility for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of this policy is the headteacher, the governing body with support and guidance from the lead officer for equality and diversity, they are responsible for:

- Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities in this regard;
- Working closely with the lead governor responsible for equality and diversity
- Supporting positively the evaluation of activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on all groups, including Special Educational Needs (SEN), Children in Care, Minority Ethnic including traveller and English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and Free School Meals, in the following recommended areas:
  - Pupils' progress and attainment
  - Teaching and learning
  - Behaviour discipline and exclusions
  - Attendance
  - Admissions
  - All forms of bullying including incidents of prejudice related bullying
  - Parental involvement
  - Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities
  - Staff recruitment and retention
  - Visits and visitors

## Equality Act 2010 update:

School Uniform Policy: There are recognised benefits in having a school uniform, as a uniform can: instil pride; support positive behaviour and discipline; contribute towards the ethos of a school; help to ensure pupils of all races and backgrounds feel welcome; protect children from social pressures to dress in a particular way; nurture cohesion; and promote good relations between different group of pupils.

The law: Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 schools must not discriminate on grounds of age, sex, gender reassignment, transgender, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief or sexual orientation. The leading cases challenging uniform policies have tended to focus on racial or religious matters.

Unlawful discrimination can be direct, where the school treats a pupil differently from other pupils on the prohibited grounds, or indirect, where all pupils are treated equally but the effect of that treatment is different on, for example, different racial or religious groups.

What does this mean for our school?

In light of the case law in this area and the obligations under the Equality Act 2010, we will consider the following points:

- whether an exception to the school uniform policy applies in specific cases, such as to accommodate a pupil's disability or injury;
- to take care to ensure that the uniform policy does not discourage parents from certain social groups from applying for a place at the school for their child. For example, to avoid disadvantage to any racial groups. Uniform policies should take into account specific differences in dress, hairstyle and even the significance of certain items of jewellery for pupils from different racial backgrounds;
- in some circumstances it may be appropriate to allow an exception to the policy to be made for a particular pupil. If an exception cannot be made, and would put a pupil at a disadvantage, consider whether the reasons for not making an exception are a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. In other words, what will be the impact on the established aims of the school's uniform policy by allowing an exception; and
- schools are more likely to be able to show that their policies are fair and non-discriminatory when they have been widely consulted on, for example, with staff, pupils, parents and governors.

It remains the case that the school is free to adopt a uniform policy and can require their pupils to adhere to them. However, case law indicates that we must consider making exceptions or changing their uniform policies where appropriate, not only for those of certain religious beliefs, but also for pupils who contend that a cultural or family practice means that they cannot conform and where other special circumstances apply which could be linked to one of the prohibited grounds.

Reasonable Adjustment: As a school we are required to take reasonable steps to provide an auxiliary aid, where a disabled person would, but for the provision of that auxiliary aid be put at a substantial disadvantage compared with a non-disabled person. This is the responsibility of the school and the governing body.

For further information on accessibility please refer to each SEND Policy and SEND Offer available at our school (information is available on the school website).

## Race

Following government consultation inclusion of caste has now been integrated within the race protected characteristic. Across the school we will ensure that we make every effort to ensure that we promote inclusion at all levels of teaching and learning and employment. We will continue to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations within the school and wider communities of St Helens.

## **Policy commitments**

### **Promoting equality: Curriculum**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality, including augmentative provision;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour and language;
- The use of non-stereotyped materials which reflect accurately a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles

### **Promoting equality: Achievement**

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils and staff regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation ethnicity or social background. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- It is important to place a high priority on the provisions for special educational needs and disability;
- A range of teaching methods to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils and that to promote pupil engagement, pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

### **Promoting equality: Ethos and culture**

- We are aware that those involved in leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;
- There should be a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality
- Reasonable adjustments will be made (within the limitations of resources available or provided in an alternative way) to ensure access for pupils and visitors (including parents) with disabilities;
- Provision is made to provide for the cultural, social, moral and spiritual needs of all pupils through the planning of assemblies, classroom based and off site activities;
- Pupils are given an effective voice, for example through the School Council and through pupil perception surveys which regularly seek their views, and where we can we take action;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community.

#### **Promoting equality: Staff recruitment and professional development**

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and linked to safeguarding practices to ensure good equality practice through the recruitment and selection process;
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of equalities policy and practice;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

#### **Promoting equality: Countering and challenging harassment and bullying**

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording, reporting and monitoring incidents;
- The school reports to Governors and the local authority on an annual basis the number of diversity related incidents recorded in the school.

#### **Promoting equality: Partnerships with parents/carers and the wider community**

This school aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure parents/carers from all backgrounds are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life;
- Ensure that there are good channels of communication to ensure parents views are captured and acted upon;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. pupils with disabilities, EAL, traveller are made to feel welcome.

#### **Responsibility for the policy**

At St Helens Primary School, all members of the school community have a responsibility for the promotion of equalities.

#### **The Governing Body has a responsibility for ensuring that:**

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's equality policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality objectives are easily identifiable (please see Action Plan – section 6 page 10);
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The named Equalities Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on any diversity related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken

**The headteacher and senior leadership has a responsibility for:**

- In partnership with the Governing Body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and any supporting action plans;
- Co-ordinating activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the equalities legislation;
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to all forms of diversity incidents and discrimination

**All school staff have responsibility for:**

- The implementation of the schools equalities policy and any supporting action plans;
- Dealing with reported incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other equality protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school, local authority, or recognised training provider.

**Measuring the impact of the policy**

The equalities policy and all other relevant policies listed in 3.1 of this policy will be evaluated and monitored for their equality impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from different groups that make up St Helens Primary School. As part of this policy action plan (please see below) a timeline will be published to enable equality analysis (equality impact assessment) to be undertaken at the appropriate time. The main findings from the equality impact assessments will be published for the school community and used to make any necessary improvements and or changes to policies/procedures/ action plans etc.

## St Helens Primary School Equality Objectives 2020 - 2022

Ref	Objective	Success criteria	Activity	Lead	Progress milestones
1	All staff and governors are aware of the Single Equalities Scheme and have awareness of their responsibilities	All school stakeholders will be aware of their responsibility to promote Equality	<p>Raise awareness of Single Equalities Scheme scheme at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Staff meetings</li> <li>• FGB meetings</li> </ul> <p>Governor visit form to include standing item to monitor this</p>	Headteacher, Equality governors	<p>June 2021</p> <p>June 2022</p>
2	To narrow the gap in attendance for pupils with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act, by fostering good relationships with parents and carers and seeking to understand the barriers to good attendance	Attendance gap between pupils with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act and whole school community is reduced	<p>Regular meetings between Headteacher and EWO to identify issues and actions</p> <p>Conversations with parents where issues arise</p> <p>Monitoring by Attendance Governor, including attendance at some EWO meetings</p>	Headteacher, SENCO, Attendance Governor	<p>Ongoing, standing item at FGB meetings</p> <p>Reviewed and updated in school term</p>
3	To promote mental health and wellbeing in all children and staff	<p>Improved awareness of the vulnerable groups, and potentially vulnerable groups within the school</p> <p>Wellbeing surveys of children and staff reveal good levels of mental health and wellbeing</p> <p>Maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment</p> <p>All children have an equal opportunity to earn rewards</p>	<p>Promote wall displays and classroom resources that represent a diverse range of people, topics and ideas, challenge stereotypes and provide signposting information where young people can access support</p> <p>Elsa support for individuals and groups as required</p> <p>Reward assemblies reward achievement in areas other than 'academic' subjects</p> <p>Governors to monitor these activities</p>	Headteacher, Elsa, SENCO	<p>Ongoing. Reviewed and updated in school term</p> <p>Wellbeing surveys to be conducted at least annually</p>

4	<p>To promote equality through ethos and culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster good relationships between all members of the school community</li> <li>Promote a welcoming openness and tolerance by both staff and pupils</li> <li>Provision is made to provide the cultural, social moral and spiritual needs of all pupils</li> </ul>	<p>Good relationships are evident in the school and pupils demonstrate tolerance and acceptance</p> <p>Welcoming ethos of the school is evident on entry and around the school</p> <p>Pupils are prepared for living in a diverse community</p> <p>Lunch provision to cater for different dietary and cultural needs and feature a wide array of food.</p>	<p>Active opportunities to explore and discuss diversity, including issues around Black Lives Matter, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assemblies</li> <li>English, History, RE, PHSE lessons</li> <li>Daily discussion of topical issues, using resources such as 'Newsround'</li> </ul> <p>School to ensure caterers provide for different dietary and cultural needs</p> <p>Organise visitors to the school that highlight diversity and equality of opportunity, including through <a href="https://www.equalsiw.org.uk/">https://www.equalsiw.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Organise an 'International Day', with each class exploring a different country and culture</p> <p>Governors to monitor these activities</p>	Headteacher, staff	<p>Ongoing. Reviewed and updated in school term</p> <p>Visits to take place termly</p> <p>International Day to take place before June 2021</p>
5	<p>To promote equality through the curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparing pupils for a life in a diverse society</li> <li>Exploring concepts and issues related to identity and equality</li> <li>Promoting attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour and language</li> <li>The use of non-stereotyped materials which reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles</li> </ul>	<p>Planning that reflects diversity across the curriculum</p> <p>Raised awareness of cultural diversity</p> <p>Pupils with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act will see themselves reflected in the curriculum</p> <p>Learning resources, including wall displays, reading books and toys reflect a diverse</p>	<p>Curriculum will be monitored on a regular basis in line with Equality Act</p> <p>Learning walks regularly to include 'Equality Audits' of school displays, reading books and other resources. Governor visit form to include standing item to monitor this</p> <p>Review RE curriculum to ensure the curriculum covers religion but also promotes culture and diversity</p>	Headteacher, subject leads, governors	<p>At least termly</p> <p>RE curriculum to be reviewed by December 2020??</p>

## Glossary of Terms

□ Equality Act 2010	40 years of equality and diversity legislation developed and combined into a single piece of legislation
□ SEAL	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
□ SEN	Special Educational Needs
□ KS	Key Stage
□ EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
□ SIP	School Improvement Plan
□ SEF	School Evaluation Framework
□ Protected Characteristic	As covered by the Equality Act 2010, providing protection in the following areas:- age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation
□ SAR	School Action Research
□ SEF	School Evaluation Framework
□ SIF	School Improvement Facilitator
□ RAP	Raising Attainment Plan
□ FSM	Free School Meals
□ EAL	English as an Additional Language
□ SDP	School Development Plan