

**St Kenelm's
C of E Primary School**



**Equality Policy
September 2024**

Nurturing each and all. Guiding, Trusting, Inspiring and Celebrating.

Our Vision, Values and Ethos

Our Vision

Nurturing each and all. Guiding, Trusting, Inspiring and Celebrating.

(The Parable of the Lost Sheep, Matthew 18. 10-14)

Our vision is to celebrate and support all individuals on their life journey within a Christian ethos. We aim to provide a nurturing environment inspiring all to achieve their full potential and flourish through personal discovery within a caring, trusting community.

Our Values

Respect, Honesty, Friendship, Compassion, Thankfulness & Wisdom.

Values are fundamental expressions of what we think and believe. As a school we encourage children to think about personal and social values and to develop their capacity to be active and effective citizens.

Our Ethos

St Kenelm's School demonstrates the major Christian values in the ways children are cared for and in the care and respect the children are expected to show towards all other people, the world beyond the school and their immediate surroundings. As a school, we celebrate the diversity of the wider community and are committed to the principles of inclusion and equal opportunity.

Being kind, helpful and tolerant to each other in line with New Testament teaching underpins the school's ethos.

Following Jesus, our Good Shepherd, our hope is that children will grow into good shepherds themselves; treating each other with love, kindness, care and respect, as they would want to be treated themselves.

St Kenelm's CE Primary School, Equality Policy and Plan (September 2022 - 2026)

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INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act, and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

This Equality Policy and Plan sets out the school's approach to promoting equality and diversity in-line with legislative requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

The Single Equality Act reflects the Government's commitment, 'to narrowing gaps, and to tackling the barriers to equal opportunities and social mobility which hold individuals back and bring heavy social and economic costs. Equality is central to building a strong economy and fairer society. It underpins the Coalition's guiding principles of freedom, fairness and responsibility'.

The Government believes that they need to reform education to tackle educational inequality, which has widened in recent years. They believe, 'that too many children are held back by disadvantage and discrimination. We want to build a fair society where social mobility is unlocked; where everyone, regardless of background, has the chance to succeed. We welcome the fact that the Equality Act gives us all an opportunity to do this in a more streamlined and effective way'.

This plan sets out some of the ways in which, as a school, we are going to tackle inequality and promote equality, to raise standards and narrow gaps. It includes an action plan outlining what we intend to do to bring to life our equalities priorities, including information about how we are monitoring our progress against that action plan.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Kenelm's CE Primary School is a growing village school. Our families live within the catchment area and surrounding areas. 23% are eligible for FSM, 18% are identified with SEND, and pupil mobility is low.

At St Kenelm's CE Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The school recognises it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper including:

- Boys and girls, men and women
- All minority ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Pupils or families with different religions or beliefs
- Pupils and others with special educational needs
- Pupils and others with a range of disabilities
- Children looked after and their carers

- Children or staff who are gay or lesbian
- Pupils who are pregnant or have just given birth
- Pupils or staff undergoing gender reassignment

The achievement of all pupils will be monitored and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. As a school we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school:

- Low self-esteem, low expectations and peer group pressure
- Experience of bullying, harassment or social exclusion
- Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and no adequate home study space
- Low parental support or different parental expectations
- Frequent moves and lack of stability in life leading to time out of school or low attendance
- Lack of help with emotional, mental and physical well-being, and poor behaviour including exclusions
- Language difficulties
- Special Educational Needs
- Lack of physical access to school facilities or services
- Inappropriate curriculum
- Recruitment, management and development of staff and governors

The school recognises that it has a legal obligation under the disability discrimination act to meet the needs of people with disabilities even if it requires giving them more favourable treatment. (Disability Equality Schemes paper).

The school recognises that new Positive Action provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. If we decide to use these we will ensure that it is a proportionate response to achieve the relevant aim.

EQUALITY AND THE LAW

The Equality Act 2010 has replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It also provides some changes that schools need to be aware of.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends

the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

As far as schools are concerned, for the most part, the effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. However, schools that are already complying with the law should not find major differences in what they need to do.

The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools that existed under previous legislation – such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions to single-sex schools and schools of a religious character, are all replicated in the new act. However, there are some changes that will have an impact on schools as follows:

- It is now unlawful for employers to ask health-related questions of applicants before job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. This means that schools should no longer, as a matter of course, require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. Schools are advised to review their existing practices to ensure they are complying with both the Health Standards Regulations and Section 60 of the Equality Act.
- It is now unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil.
- It is now unlawful to discriminate against a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby.
- New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim – for example providing special catch-up classes for Roma children or a project to engage specifically with alienated Asian boys.
- Extending the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. However, this duty is not due to come into effect until a later date, following consultation on implementation and approach.

The action plan at the end of this Equality Policy outlines the actions St Kenelm's CE Primary School will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

The 2010 Act states that, 'Schools need to make sure that pupils of all races are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. Schools should check that there are no practices which could result in unfair, less favourable treatment of such pupils. For example, it would be unlawful for a selective school to impose a higher standard for admission to applicants from an ethnic minority background, or for a

school to impose stricter disciplinary penalties on African Caribbean boys than they do in similar circumstances to children from other backgrounds.

‘Segregation of pupils by race is always direct discrimination. It would thus be unlawful for a school to put children into sets, or into different sports in PE classes, according to their ethnicity. This stipulation in the Act is to make it clear that claims that segregated treatment is “separate but equal” cannot be sustained where race is concerned. It does not mean that schools cannot take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting children of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.’

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 states, ‘The overriding principle of equality legislation is generally one of equal treatment - i.e. that you must treat a black person no less well than a white person, or a man as favourably as a woman. However, the provisions relating to disability discrimination are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and may have to make changes to your practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what you offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can. So in a school setting the general principle is that you have to treat male and female, black and white, gay and straight pupils equally but you may be required to treat disabled pupils differently. Discrimination is also defined rather differently in relation to disability.’

New Provisions Relating to Disability

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). There are some minor differences:

- Unlike the DDA the Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must demonstrate that they cannot carry out, thus making the definition of disability less restrictive for disabled people to meet.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified. The fact that it must be reasonable provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be defended as justified – bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally.
- Schools and local authorities will (when provisions are implemented) be under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through Special Educational Needs (SEN) Statements.

Definition of Disability

The Act defines disability as when a person has a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’ Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person

meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Unlawful Behaviour with regards to Disabled Pupils

Direct Discrimination: A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled – for example by having an admission bar on disabled applicants.

A change for schools in this Act is that there can no longer be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. Under the DDA schools could justify some direct discrimination – if was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. What the change means is that if a school discriminates against a person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

Indirect Discrimination: A school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only – for example having a rule that all pupils must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school – unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability: A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability – for example by not allowing a disabled pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for her to get out and back. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

Harassment: A school must not harass a pupil because of his disability – for example, a teacher shouting at the pupil because the disability means that he is constantly struggling with class-work or unable to concentrate.

Reasonable Adjustments and When they have to be Made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

A minor change for schools is that a failure to make a reasonable adjustment cannot now be

justified, whereas under the DDA it could be. However this change should not have any practical effect due to the application of the reasonableness test – i.e. if an adjustment is reasonable then it should be made and there can be no justification for why it is not made. Schools will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

In addition to having a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally as it is likely that any school will have a disabled pupil at some point. However, schools are not obliged to anticipate and make adjustments for every imaginable disability and need only consider general reasonable adjustments - e.g. being prepared to produce large font papers for pupils with a visual impairment even though there are no such pupils currently admitted to the school. Such a strategic and wider view of the school's approach to planning for disabled pupils will also link closely with its planning duties.

The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable although a code of practice produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for schools to consider the reasonableness of adjustments based on the circumstances of each case. However, factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route.

Cost will inevitably play a major part in determining what is reasonable and it is more likely to be reasonable for a school with substantial financial resources to have to make an adjustment with a significant cost, than for a school with fewer resources. The Act gives the example, 'a small rural primary school may not be able to provide specialised IT equipment for any disabled pupils who may need it and it may not be reasonable for the school to provide that equipment. On the other hand, a much larger school might reasonably be expected to provide it. Often, though, effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption and are therefore very likely to be reasonable for a school to have to make'.

Schools generally will try to ensure that disabled pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life and the reasonable adjustments duty will help support that. However, there will be times when adjustments cannot be made because to do so would have a detrimental effect on other pupils and would therefore not be reasonable – for example, if a school put on a geology field trip which necessarily involved climbing and walking over rough ground and after fully considering alternatives to accommodate a disabled pupil in a wheelchair who could not take part it determined that there was no viable alternative or way of enabling the disabled pupil to participate or be involved, it would not have to cancel the trip as originally planned. This is unlikely to constitute direct discrimination or failure to make a reasonable adjustment

The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing SEN Statement provisions which are part of education legislation, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids to pupils with a

Statement of special educational need.

The duty applies in respect of all disabled pupils but many will have an SEN Statement and auxiliary aids provided by the LA and so may not require anything further. However, if the disabled pupil does not have a statement (or the statement doesn't provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

Schools' Duties Around Accessibility For Disabled Pupils

The Equality Act states that, 'Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

Schools must implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Schools will also need to have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the School Development Plan.

Religion or Belief

The Equality Act defines, 'religion' as being any religion, and 'belief' as any religious or philosophical belief. A lack of religion or a lack of belief is also protected characteristics. These definitions are fairly broad and the concepts of religion and belief therefore must be construed in accordance with Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights and with existing case law. This means that to benefit from protection under the Act, a religion or belief must have a clear structure and belief system, and should have a certain level of cogency, seriousness and cohesion, and not be incompatible with human dignity.

Religion 'will include for example all the major faith groups and 'belief' will include non-religious world views such as humanism. Religion will also include denominations or sects within a religion, such as Catholicism or Protestantism within Christianity. It is not however intended to include political beliefs such as Communism or support for any particular political party.

Lack of religion or belief is also included in the definition of 'religion or belief'. This means it will be unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds that they do not adhere, or sufficiently adhere, to a particular religion or belief (even one shared by the discriminator), or indeed any religion or belief at all – such as, for example, an atheist.

Discrimination because of religion or belief means treating a person less favourably than another person is or would be treated, because of their religion or belief, or the religion or belief they are perceived to have, their lack of religion or belief, or the religion or belief, or lack of it, of someone else with whom they are associated.

The Equality Act makes it clear that, 'unlawful religious discrimination can include discrimination against another person of the same religion or belief as the discriminator. This is to ensure that any potential discrimination between, e.g. Orthodox and Reform Jews, or Shia and Sunni Muslims, would also be unlawful. So if a Muslim pupil is not chosen for a part in a school play because it is thought to be inappropriate for a girl of that faith, that will be discrimination even if the decision was taken by a Muslim teacher. Nor could a Muslim teacher choose one Muslim pupil over another for a part in the play because he thinks the chosen pupil is a more observant member of his faith and should be rewarded'.

The definition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief does not address discrimination on any other ground (such as race, sex or sexual orientation). The Act does not allow a teacher to discriminate against a pupil because of his own personal religious views about homosexuality or the role of women for example.

Gender

The 2010 Act states that, 'Schools need to make sure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. They should check that there are no practices which could result in unfair, less favourable treatment of boys or girls. For example, it would be unlawful for a school to require girls to learn needlework while giving boys the choice between needlework and woodwork classes'.

Although the Equality Act forbids discrimination in access to benefits, facilities and services; the Act does contain an exception which permits single-sex sports. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or other activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average woman (or girl) would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average man (or boy). But while this exception might permit a mixed school to have a boys only football team, the school would still have to allow girls equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities. The judgment on whether girls would be at a physical disadvantage needs to take into account the particular group in question, so it is much less likely to justify segregated sports for younger children. Where separate teams exist, it would be unlawful discrimination for a school to treat one group less favourably – for example by providing the boys' hockey or cricket team with much better resources than the girls'.

The Equality Act protects gender variant and trans children/adults with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This applies to anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process of reassigning their sex. For this to apply, a pupil/adult does not have to be undergoing a medical procedure to change their sex, but is proposing to take active steps to transition socially.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act places a requirement on schools, 'to make sure that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. They should check that there are no practices which could result in unfair, less favourable treatment of such pupils.

EQUALITY IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

School Vision

Nurturing each and all.

Guiding, Trusting, Inspiring and Celebrating.

(The Parable of the Lost Sheep, Matthew 18. 10-14)

Our vision is to celebrate and support all individuals on their life journey within a Christian ethos. We aim to provide a nurturing environment inspiring all to achieve their full potential and flourish through personal discovery within a caring, trusting community.

Values

At St Kenelm's CE Primary School, our policies and practices are rooted in our core values of:

Respect, Honesty, Friendship, Compassion, Thankfulness & Wisdom.

Specifically:

- The school is committed to celebrating diversity and equality in many ways, in particular by recognising the uniqueness of every individual.
- Good personal and community relations are actively promoted by fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all members of our community.
- Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.
- Information on ethnicity, gender and disability is collected through the admissions process.
- Whole school systems emphasising praise, recognition and reward exist to promote and celebrate positive behaviour, sustained effort and hard work, contributions to the school community, and achievements outside school.
- We promote positive attitudes towards disabled people by having an open admissions policy and including all children in all activities.
- We promote positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups/religions etc.
- We involve pupils, parents and staff in the life and work of the school, for example through involvement in community events, through our School Association etc.
- We promote high expectations of all through celebrating achievement.
- We communicate behaviour expectations through modelling good behaviour and having a clear and explicit Behaviour Policy which is shared with pupils and parents.
- We ensure that we welcome applications for school places and jobs from all sections by having a comprehensive, non-selective intake. Advertisements for

jobs state that there are no barriers to job applications as we adhere to Oxfordshire County Council Equal Opportunity Policies.

- We provide more favourable treatment for disabled students in our break and lunchtime support arrangements.

Teaching and Learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we track pupil progress and identify under-performance and provide support to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps.
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and interests of all pupils and that the taught curriculum promotes and celebrates equality.
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Ensure that the school's Marking and Assessment Policies promote learning for all.
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance, for example through termly monitoring of data, recognising high attendance.

Supporting Learners with Particular Needs

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs, the school:

- Will provide distance learning for any child out of school.
- Will prepare Personal Education Plans to focus on learning priorities for any child in care.
- Provide in-class TA support and intervention groups for all children identified through Provision Mapping.
- Arrange language support as required.
- Support vulnerable pupils through Nurture Groups, (ELSA).
- Provide a quiet reflection/prayer space, with pastoral support on-hand, when required.
- Provide appropriate training to enable staff to meet particular learning needs.

- Will draw on the expertise of outside professional services to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Listening to Pupils, Staff, Parents and Others

To do this:

- Children are encouraged to express their views during PSHE lessons and Circle Time, and through regular surveys including an Annual Pupil Questionnaire.
- The school hears the 'pupil voice' through the School Council and other pupil leadership groups.
- The school actively seeks staff views and listens to staff concerns, for example through Team and Staff Meetings. The HSE Well Being Survey is carried out every two years; the results of which are analysed externally and action plans constructed and embedded into development plans.
- The school seeks the views of parents through parent/teacher consultations, informal meetings and regular surveys including an Annual Parent Questionnaire.
- The school encourages, enables and hears the full range of views including those with disabilities by taking the advice of the Local Authority.

Equalising Opportunities

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are likely to be economically disadvantaged, the school:

- Ensures school uniform is affordable by avoiding expensive clothing.
- Avoids putting parents under unnecessary financial pressure by offering subsidies for certain activities, for example the cost of school trips and visits.
- Promotes the take-up of extra-curricular opportunities by subsidising those pupils who cannot afford to attend and by subsidising other chargeable activities. Attendance at clubs is monitored to ensure equality of opportunity.

Admissions and Exclusions

We follow Oxfordshire County Council's and the Diocese admissions arrangements which are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Ensuring Fair and Equal Treatment for Staff and Others

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against adults as well as pupils in school and that positive role models and a wider perspective will strengthen the school, we will:

- Demonstrate our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing, recruitment and employment practices.

- Ensure that all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer Duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Promoting dignity at work through adoption the OCC Dignity at Work Policy.
- Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Ensuring Fair and Equal Treatment for Pupils

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against pupils, the school:

- Will accommodate the needs of different cultures, races and religions where reasonably possible (in relation to wearing of uniform for example).
- Monitors the use of sanctions to ensure that staff do not impose stricter disciplinary penalties on one group than they do in similar circumstances to others.
- Will ensure where relevant that teaching or the expression of religious belief about same sex relationships is conveyed responsibly and sensitively.

Informing and Involving Parents and Carers

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible, the school:

- Explains how it operates through its newsletter, information evenings for parents, parent workshops and the website.
- Offers a range of ways of communicating between school and parents that meet parents' circumstances and needs through telephone contact or e-mail, through Home School Links Books, and Parents' Evenings.
- Actively encourages parents to attend consultation evenings by teachers telephoning non- attenders or making alternative arrangements.
- Ensures that parents understand how well their child is progressing through termly reports and parent/teacher meetings.

- Explains how parents can help their child at home, for example class-based parent workshops covering Literacy and Numeracy; information evenings to explain SATs, Internet Safety, the school's approach to Sex Education etc
- Explains how parents and others can help in school, for example by helping in classrooms, at Forest School sessions, hearing children read, joining the SKSA etc.
- Encourages parents to join the SKSA and the Governing Body by regular announcements in the school newsletter.

Encourage Participation of Under-Represented Groups

Recognising that the school has an opportunity to model empowerment of all groups including disabled, ethnic and religious, and socially and emotionally disadvantaged groups, the school will:

- Recruit governors representative of the pupil population and/or community.
- Encourage the widest participation in SKSA activities by running events that appeal to a cross section of the school community.
- Support individuals and community groups to express their case on matters affecting themselves and their community through newsletters, invitations to speak in assemblies, through distribution of previously agreed information and school representation, for example local Remembrance Services.

Welcoming New Pupils and Helping them to Settle Effectively

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible, and to move mid-year difficult, the school:

- Fosters a happy start through induction days prior to the start of a new academic year.
- Offers a staggered start to a new school year over the first week.
- Challenges any inappropriate behaviours/attitudes.
- Briefs Teaching Assistant to monitor vulnerable pupils and communicate any concerns to class teachers.
- Ensures effective school transfer and induction mid-year by the use of buddies and sensitive communication between home and school.
- Ensures that extra help is given to children who find a change of school challenging, for example through joining a Nurture Group.
- Ensures well-planned school adjustments are made to cater for a child with disabilities including the availability of additional classroom support.
- Liaises with support services/schools of transfer in advance of transfer to inform any ongoing necessary modifications or alterations to provision.

Making the School Accessible for All

The school:

- Meets the needs of pupils, staff and others with physical and or sensory disabilities by providing designated toilets, and adaptations made to the school buildings as appropriate.

- Ensures that curricular and extra-curricular opportunities are available for pupils with disabilities by assessing access issues and putting risk assessments in place.
- Provides 1:1 for children who require a higher level of supervision at break, on visits out of school, and other times.
- Identifies further developments by keeping in regular touch with representatives of disability groups in order to update provision.

CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

It is a requirement that the development of this Policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils, parents and carers, and governors. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the Annual Parent and Pupil Questionnaires, feedback from other activities (visitors, staff, parents, pupils), Parents' Evening.
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET.
- Feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons and Circle Times, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to school and learning.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans, mentoring and support.
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of Governors

The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability. Further:

- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The Role of the Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policy; she is supported by the Governing Body in doing so.

It is the Headteacher's role to:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promote respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- Treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The Role of Staff: Teaching and Non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary and support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

Bullying and harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation are unacceptable and are not tolerated within the school environment. The school's abhorrence of such behaviour is communicated to pupils, parents and staff, for example through the curriculum, the website and newsletters, and staff training. All parents of new pupils are directed to the policies page on the website, where they can view the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying Policy as part of the induction process .

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis. All incidents are discussed with the Governor who leads on Safeguarding. Incidents are monitored to ensure that they are dealt with effectively.

What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Bullying and harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry

Report (1999) as:

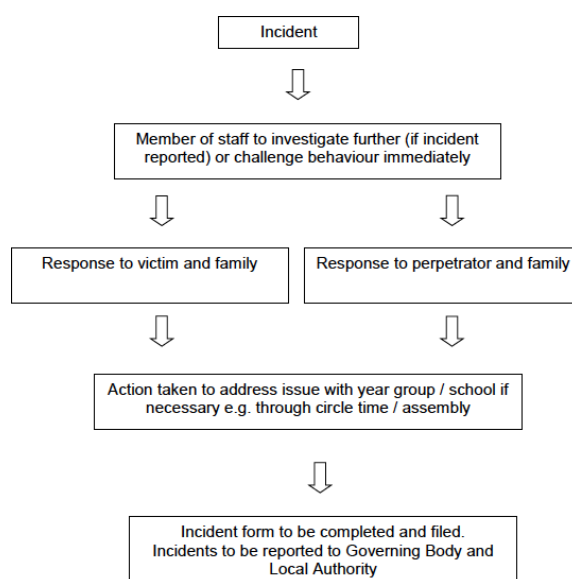
'Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.'

Types of Discriminatory Incidents that Can Occur Are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference, for example food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school, and ensure that incidents are reported and addressed swiftly and effectively. The agreed procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND IMPACT

The Policy has been agreed by our Governing Body. We recognise that the strength of this policy depends upon ensuring that everyone is actively implementing it, and that gaps and the need for further development will arise from effective evaluation.

The school will collect and analyse evidence and data on children’s achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

The school has a rolling programme for reviewing policies and their impact. In-line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire Policy and accompanying Action Plan on a three-year cycle. Completion and discussion of the Checklist for Staff and Governors below will inform the review, and pupils and parents will be consulted on how the Policy is working and how it could be improved. All aspects of inclusion and equality will be reported via the school website and newsletters.

PUBLISHING THE PLAN

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Single Equality Plan, we will:

- Publish our Plan on the school website
- Raise awareness of the Plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available.

This policy will be ratified by the Governing Body.

Signed

Dated

Policy reviewed: September 2024

Future Review: September 2025

CHECK LIST FOR STAFF AND GOVERNORS

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?