



The Alver Valley  
Federation of Schools

Single Equality Scheme Policy

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## **Introduction**

We welcome the equality duties on schools, and regard these as essential. We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality creates a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our schools.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents.

Throughout this Scheme, ‘parents’ can be taken to mean mothers, fathers, carers and other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our schools to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by:

- active involvement with key stakeholders, in developing this Scheme and in its review and implementation
- pro-active leadership
- prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible, improved outcomes
- removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policies for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school.

Priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion are identified through our school self-evaluation processes, with an action plan included in our school improvement planning. Our commitment to equality is thus a fundamental part of our drive to become “outstanding” schools.

### **1. National and Legal Context for Diversity**

All schools have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality. The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
- The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must have due regard to
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability- related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled peoples’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

The disability equality general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it complements, and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments.

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non religious and socio-economic groups. There are no statutory requirements for schools to have a policy or action plan for promoting community cohesion. However, we have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty.

Although there are no equivalent promotional duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, we must also ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

## **2. School Context**

Hampshire is a large and diverse county with a growing population; at the last Census the population was up 7% with a total of **1,759,700** residents. There is a mix of urban and rural areas but the majority of the population live in urban areas. The 2011 census shows that 5.6% of the population of Gosport are from ethnic communities. In 2015 RAISE online showed that 4.6% of junior school pupils were from an ethnic communities and 5% of infant school pupils were from ethnic communities. 5% of Infant pupils had English as an additional language and 5.4% of junior schools pupils had EAL. The 2011 census shows 6% of the Gosport population claim incapacity benefit compared with 7% nationally. 1% of the Gosport population were registered, the same as the national figure. For 2007/08, there were 732 reported incidents of hate crime; 83.5% were related to race and the remaining 16.5% were related to sexual orientation and transsexual issues. Nearly half the population are aged between 25 and 59, with an increasing number of people over the age of 75. The main religious group is Christian (8%), followed by Muslim (0.4%), Hindu (0.3%), and Sikh (0.1%).

Within Hampshire, our schools serve an area of recognised social and economic deprivation, with a significant number of our pupils living in families affected by poverty, debt, poor housing or overcrowding, and disability including mental health issues. In 2015 65% of junior school pupils and 46% of Infant school pupils were entitled to free school meals (FSM). Also in 2015 25% of pupils in the junior school and 14.7% of infant pupils were on the special educational needs register.

The Rowner community is relatively self-contained. The Rowner area is subject to a significant programme of urban renewal and regeneration.

The school has open channels of communication with parents and carers through:

- open availability of the Executive Headteacher, Head of Schools and class teachers
- regular newsletters
- open events and workshops
- regular parent/teacher consultations
- annual questionnaires

- parent governor representation
- family support worker
- PTA

Pupils' views are sought through School Council and pupil conferencing, and through opportunities in the PSED curriculum for children to share their views. The schools have active policies of encouraging children to share any concerns with an adult, promptly, and supervision routines ensure that this is easy for children to do

Staff have a voice through their representatives on the Governing Body. Teachers have annual professional development meetings with the headteacher, which are held in addition to the performance management routine, and the provision of "Phase leadership" also provides a forum for staff to air their views with middle managers. Learning support assistants have regular meetings with the SENCO where queries and concerns can be raised.

The Governing Body includes community representatives, and governors with links to partner agencies e.g. Surestart.

#### **4. Monitoring Equality**

We monitor closely, the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, identifying those in vulnerable groups and comparing their achievement with the achievement of their peers.

This includes:

- children with special educational needs
- children with social, emotional and mental health needs
- children accessing free school meals
- children with attendance issues (including exclusion)
- more able pupils
- disabled children and/or children with sensory impairment
- children with chronic illness
- looked after and adopted from care children
- children who have English as an additional language
- children from military service families

The success and needs of staff (including for professional development) are monitored through performance management.

Complaints and incidents are monitored by the executive headteacher and head of schools. The school reports as required to the LA regarding violent or racial incidents, and regarding accidents. Our annual evaluation cycle includes reports to the Governing Body

#### **5. Specific Equality Areas**

##### **a) Race Equality**

The schools recognise their general duty to:

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

We recognise the need to promote opportunities for pupils to encounter the cultural diversity of the wider UK.

We recognise that within our local context it will always be important to ensure that pupils and families from ethnic groups other than white-British are welcomed, valued and fully included in the life of the schools.

### **b) Community Cohesion**

All our policies and the organisation of our schools are designed to ensure that our school communities are cohesive and inclusive. PSED, the Prevent Duty and promotion of British Values and Alver Valley school values, the Behaviour Management Policy, Living Difference curriculum are all key elements within this approach embedded in classroom practice as is the use of assemblies to reinforce these messages at a Key stage and whole school level. In addition to this the school welcomes and builds links with members of the community to inspire and raise aspirations of all pupils.

The schools actively engage with partner agencies e.g. Children and Families' Services, CAMHS, Transform, the Police, Locality team, School Nurse team, Surestart, the Nimrod centre, The Youthy, local Churches, The Rowner Carnival.

### **c) Disability Equality**

Our premises are maintained and developed in partnership with the LA, ensuring consideration of the needs and entitlement of disabled children and adults. Redevelopment of the site in 2012/13 has the needs of disabled children and adults at its heart.

Curriculum development also considers these needs, promoting equal access to all areas for all pupils, and supporting staff with disabilities in delivering the full curriculum. This also applies to planning and organisation of educational visits and extended school activities.

Written information to parents is provided in plain English. Translation services are available if required. The schools are sensitive to the needs of visual impaired parents and carers.

### **d) Gender Equality**

The schools monitor the achievement of boys and girls, and take steps when inequalities are identified.

Gender issues are considered in curriculum development and the provision of extra-curricular activities.

Headteachers and governors are alert to the possibility of gender inequality in staff teams, especially where one gender is significantly under-represented. The headteachers will take action to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

### **e) Other Equality Areas**

The schools have:

- implemented government sex and relationship guidance to support teachers to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation issues and questions

- developed a clear anti-bullying policy, in a format easily accessible to parents and carers.
- provided specific training to support staff to implement this policy

## **6. Working in Partnership**

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations. As a result the schools:

- ensure information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all
- promote the participation of under-represented groups
- have formed links with community groups or other schools to help promote
- community cohesion
- seek partnerships to help meet the requirements of disabled pupils.

## **7. Publishing the Scheme, raising awareness**

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

- placing it on our staff network
- placing it on our website
- making it available on request

## **8. Monitoring and evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan**

Monitoring the scheme and its impact is an intrinsic part of our annual school evaluation cycle.

The findings of this evaluation will be used to update the Equality Action Plan, and inform subsequent Single Equality Schemes.

## **9. Links with other school policies**

School policies that link with, and have informed this Scheme include:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy, including anti-bullying policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Policy for the Fair Recruitment of Staff
- Disability Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Gender Equality Policy

## **10. Roles and responsibilities**

The role of the Governing Body is to:

- monitor the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan to check progress
- and assess impact on staff, learners and parents
- ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality
- legislation
- receive and discuss regular equality reports on progress and performance
- monitor achievement of equality targets

- check that implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan achieves improved outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

The role of the Executive Headteacher is to:

- provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- ensure staff, pupils, parents /carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Scheme and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this Scheme
- monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and Action plan
- provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this Scheme

The role of other senior leaders is to:

- drive forward implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- support staff to carry out their role in implementing this Scheme
- provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- ensure the Scheme is successfully promoted
- respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimization

All staff are expected to:

- recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to
  - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
  - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
  - tackle bias and stereotyping
  - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and report these
- highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities
- ensure that pupils are encouraged to recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to
  - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
  - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
  - tackle bias and stereotyping
  - work to promote anti-bullying strategies
  - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these