



# FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL PART OF THE LEARNING FOR LIFE TRUST

## Single Equality Scheme

**2021-2025**

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Signed:	
Date:	
Proposed review date <sup>2</sup> :	24/02/2021

<sup>1</sup> The Governing Body/Academy Trust are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher

<sup>2</sup> Part 2 of this Policy (information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality duty) will be reviewed, updated and published annually. Equality Objectives (Part 3) will be prepared and published at least every 4 years.

# REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	January 2021

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## SINGLE EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Learning for Life Trust is an equal opportunities employer and promotes an environment that is free from discrimination.

We:

- treat those working and governing in our school community fairly without discrimination,
- adhere to current equalities legislation,
- provide a working environment free from discrimination, harassment and any form of bullying and victimisation.

The Learning for Life Trust is committed to building a diverse workforce and values staff contributions. We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations.

The Learning for Life Trust promotes equality in respect of:

- Age
- Disability
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender (including gender reassignment)
- Domestic/Carer circumstances/responsibilities
- Sexual orientation
- Race (nationality; ethnic or national origin)
- Marital Status including civil partnership
- Religion or belief
- Trade union membership

We also welcome our specific duties to publish information about our school population; to explain how we have due regard for equality; and to publish equality objectives which show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities or disadvantages.

Meeting our duties to promote community cohesion, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, also supports how we meet the needs of different groups of pupils and how we foster good relations.

Any breaches of this commitment should be reported to the Headteacher at Academy level and CEO at Trust level who will undertake a full investigation or delegate this to another designated member of staff.

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# PART 1 - SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

Fairfield Primary School is part of The Learning for Life Trust. The school is guided by the Trust's Single Equality Statement and this Policy and associated Action Plan, explain how the school intends to ensure that the statement is adhered to and how it is embedded within the culture of the school.

## 1. Aims of the Single Equality Scheme

- To articulate this school's commitment to equality which permeates all school Policies and practices
- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or comes into contact with, our school community is valued and respected
- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- To comply with statutory duties under equalities legislation in one document

## 2. Purpose of the Equality Scheme

This Equality Scheme is our school's response to the specific and general duties in the current equality legislation, which has been brought together under the Equality Act 2010 (see Appendix A). It is an attempt to capture how we are systematically establishing and implementing good practice in equality and diversity.

This Equality Scheme sets out how we will:

- develop and review the Scheme and our objectives with appropriate timescales for the future;
- eliminate discrimination;
- eliminate harassment or victimisation related to any aspect of social identity or diversity;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote positive attitudes to all aspects of social identity and diversity;
- encourage participation by disabled people and people representing different aspects of social identity in public life;
- take steps to take account of difference even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others;
- take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils.

## 3. Planning to Eliminate Discrimination and Promote Equality of Opportunity

This Scheme is underpinned by the core belief that all children and young people belong to their local community and share the same rights to membership of that community and a quality education. An Action Plan linked to our objectives accompanies this Equality Scheme, which identifies what we will be doing over the coming year (and beyond) to make our school more accessible to the whole community-irrespective of background or need (See Part 3).

It encompasses our duties to promote positive outcomes in relation to race, gender and disability, but also identifies actions to address other social identities. It encompasses our anticipatory duties to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments (reasonable and proportionate steps to overcome barriers that may impede some pupils) we need to make to be best placed to help disabled pupils or visitors who come or may come to our school.

The objectives and action plan, which forms part of the school improvement plan, complement and refer to the school's Accessibility Plan as it sets out how we will increase access to education for disabled pupils, alongside other protected groups, in the following three areas:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The action plan is reviewed annually, and progress towards the equality objectives within it is reported on regularly to the Governing Body. Equality objectives have been identified through consultation with key stakeholders including pupils, parents, Governors, staff and others in the community.

Our Single Equality information report and our objectives are understood and implemented by all staff and are published on the school website. It will be made available in different formats and in different languages on request to the school office.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing the Single Equality Scheme**

### ***The Governing Body***

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that our school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- recommend all governors receive up-to-date training in all equalities duties;
- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Single Equality Scheme;
- draw up, publish and implement our school's equality objectives;
- establish that the action plans arising from the Scheme are part of our School Development Plan;
- support the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender, disability, faith/religion, age, gender reassignment etc.;
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that our school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils;
- welcome all applications to join our school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender, disability, faith/religion etc.;
- ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school because of their race, gender, disability, faith/religion etc.;
- inform and consult with parents about the Scheme;
- evaluate and review the information supporting the Scheme annually;
- evaluate the objectives and action plan at least every 4 years.

### ***The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher***

The role of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher is to:

- ensure that staff and parents are informed about the Single Equality Scheme;
- ensure that staff understand the broad legal definition of disability;
- ensure that the Scheme is implemented effectively;
- manage any day to day issues arising from the Scheme whether for pupils, for our school as an employer or for our local community;
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the Scheme;
- monitor the Scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually, on the effectiveness of the Scheme, Objectives and Action Plan;
- ensure that the SLT are kept up to date with any development affecting the Scheme/action plan arising from the Scheme;
- provide appropriate support and monitoring for all pupils and specific and targeted pupils to whom the Scheme has direct relevance, with the assistance from relevant agencies;
- ensure that all appointments 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 and in accordance with the Whole School Behaviour Policy and procedures;
- report any incidents of racism in accordance with the Equality Act;
- deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken;



- in the event of expectations not being met, ensure action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved e.g. pupil, member of staff, volunteer etc.

### **All Staff: teaching, non-teaching and other adults involved with our School**

All staff, both paid and unpaid, are required to:

- accept that this is a whole school issue and support the Single Equality Scheme;
- be aware of the Single Equality Scheme and how it relates to them;
- keep themselves up-to-date with relevant legislation and attend school organised training and information events;
- make known any queries or training requirements;
- ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and maintain awareness of our school's Equality Scheme and objectives;
- strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images;
- ensure that pupils from all protected groups are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum;
- promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relations with pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community;
- know how to deal with incidents of concern, and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- know procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination.

### **Pupils**

Pupils will:

- be involved in the development of the Scheme and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability;
- be expected to act in accordance with any relevant part of the Scheme;
- experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society;
- understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents;
- ensure the peer support programme within our school promotes understanding and supports pupils who are experiencing discrimination.

## **5. School Aims Statements**

### **Staffing and Employment**

We comply fully with legislation that protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors, student teachers) and other adults working in our school, from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. To do this we will:

- ensure that our staff are trained to help them understand their equality duties and/or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community and have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development;
- 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;
- monitor recruitment and retention;
- invest in continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society;
- not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work – for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties;
- 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.

### ***Pupils' Attainment and Progress***

We expect the highest possible standards. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and continually challenge them to reach higher standards.

The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse pupil performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any disparities, which are identified, will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.

### ***Curriculum Development and Delivery***

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 will:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- encourage pupils to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour;
- 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;
- promote activities that celebrate our common experience as well as those that recognise diversity generally and foster understanding and respect for the culture and faith of all our pupils and their families;
- use self-assessment as a teaching and learning strategy (in conjunction with our Skills and Attitudes for Life-long Learning Log), and we will provide all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress;
- seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education;
- encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and their impact on learning;

### ***Pupil Welfare and Pastoral Care***

We aim to promote the health, safety and welfare of all the children and staff providing a caring and supportive pastoral system that takes account of their needs. To do this we will:

- develop and continually review a Health, Safety and Welfare Policy document;
- ensure that the details of this Scheme are shared with all staff both teaching, non-teaching and ancillary staff;
- expect all staff and volunteers working in the school to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among boys and girls from all ethnic groups and range of abilities;
- challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities;
- take account of religious, cultural and ethnic differences, special educational needs, disability and the experiences and needs of all pupils, throughout our pastoral support;
- provide appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and encourage pupils to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning;
- give appropriate support (using external agencies where required) to victims of harassment and bullying. The perpetrators are dealt with in line with the Whole School Behaviour Policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour;

- ensure that guidance and support for pupils is delivered in a way that does not discriminate against pupils with the unseen (visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive and prone to seizure) impairments;
- ensure that appropriate and discreet facilities are available for those pupils who require personal or intimate care to protect their dignity and foster respect for their individual needs;
- ensure that staff are empowered to raise any concerns with the Senior Management Team relating to their health, safety and welfare by promoting well-being strategies among staff and in their respective groups.

### ***The Quality of Provision – Curriculum and Other Activities***

We aim to provide an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. To do this we will:

- monitor and evaluate its effectiveness through target setting and attainment analysis;
- ensure that all pupils participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school;
- develop and continuously monitor a curriculum which builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:
  - boys and girls
  - pupils learning English as an additional language
  - pupils from minority ethnic groups, including the travelling community
  - pupils who are gifted and talented
  - pupils who are undergoing gender reassignment
  - pupils with special educational needs
  - pupils with a disability
  - pupils who are looked after by the Local Authority
  - pupils who are at a risk of disaffection and exclusion
  - lesbian, gay or questioning young people
  - pupils who are the subject of child protection plans
- ensure that each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils;
- deliver a curriculum which reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes;
- ensure extra-curricular activities and special events e.g. school performances, cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental preferences related to religion and culture;
- ensure educational visits and excursions take account of the capabilities of all pupils including both physical and cognitive disabilities and cultural differences;
- make use of web-based technologies (web sites and the VLE) to support a high quality learning and teaching experience. This is delivered to all our pupils irrespective of disability (e.g. visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive and prone to seizure impairments).

### ***Behaviour and Attendance***

We expect high standards of behaviour from all pupils as appropriate for their developmental level, all staff and others, who are working or connected with the school. Details of these expected standards are set out in the Whole School Behaviour Policy.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to have a better understanding of the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses. To ensure that the Whole School Behaviour Policy and associated policies are equitable, we:

- have procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and sanctions;
- recognise that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. Our school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour;

- recognise that hate incidents or prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will act to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour;
- have clear procedures in place so that all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, sexting and harassment, including that related to racism, disability, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school procedures;
- ensure that all staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying of all types, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters;
- encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this Scheme. Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all pupils;
- will take steps to ensure that pupils, staff and parents/carers are aware of Policies and procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour, which is extremist, racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable;
- provide information and advice on attendance and exclusion to parents/carers in accessible formats such as relevant community languages and large print;
- have strategies in place to reintegrate long-term non-attenders and excluded pupils, which address the needs of all pupils;
- ensure that families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence and that cases are always followed up in a way that takes account of cultural issues or matters relating to a child's disability;
- make provision for leave of absence for religious observance, for staff as well as pupils;
- monitor attendance by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. Action is taken to address any disparities between different groups of pupils;
- will fully support children with long-term medical needs who may have an erratic attendance because they are in and out of hospital or not well enough to attend school on a regular basis;
- expect full-time attendance of Traveller pupils whilst they are on the roll of the school.

### ***Partnership with Pupils, Parents, Carers and the Wider Community***

We have established good links with our local and wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about quality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

Participation is based on information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible whilst recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take steps to ensure disabled children, young people and their parents are involved as is their entitlement. To do this we will:

- involve stakeholders including pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school in relation to all equality's duties;
- consider the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country;
- include representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve;
- monitor parental involvement and have strategies to raise participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all;
- progress reports to parents are clearly written and free from jargon to encourage participation in their child's education. Where necessary, information is available in languages and formats other than English. Parents with a disability or with learning difficulties will be able to access school's information;
- parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with special educational needs, understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action and are told about the parent partnership service when SEND is identified;

- encourage participation of under-represented groups in areas of employment e.g. through work experience placements;
- ensure that any informal events which we may hold are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups;
- work in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference;
- ensure that the school's premises, grounds and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

### ***Leadership and Management***

We have a clear Admissions Policy and procedures, which are in line with those issued by Cumbria LA. Our aim is to ensure that our admission process is fair and equitable to all pupils. We will also ensure that our employment practices reflect equality and diversity. To do this we will:

- not discriminate against a disabled pupil in the arrangements we make for determining admission;
- admit pupils with already identified special educational needs. Pupils with statements of special educational needs will always be admitted unless, through the statutory assessment process, it is demonstrated that the pupil's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children;
- gather comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. either via the admissions form or at the admissions interview;
- adhere to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties of the Governing Body;
- will take steps to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored;
- ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this Policy. All staff and visitors must support the ethos of the school, promoting equality and challenging bias and stereotyping wherever they observe it;
- ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated into the induction programme for new staff;
- recognise and value the skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.
- ensure that regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this Policy;
- ensure that resources and displays in our school reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

### ***Linguistic Diversity***

We recognise and celebrate the linguistic diversity in British society. We look for opportunities to enrich the curricular experience of all our pupils by:

- highlighting how English has borrowed from other languages (this includes etymology study as part of daily lessons);
- raising awareness of the similarities and differences between English and other languages;
- reflecting the multilingual nature of wider society in our resources and displays;
- acknowledging the differences in syntax with non-spoken forms of English e.g. British Sign Language.

### ***Gender Equality***

We are committed to combatting sex discrimination and sexism and promoting the equality of the sexes/all genders. We welcome the requirements of the Gender Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. We will give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation;
- promote equality of opportunity between people of all genders in all our functions;

- recognise that society has stereotypes for all genders, and people can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes;
- be aware that staff with caring and domestic responsibilities may need to work part-time or flexible working hours;
- work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexual harassment, domestic violence and other hate crimes;
- ensure the rights, under the Equality Act 2010, of transgender people.

### ***Admissions and Exclusions***

Our admissions arrangements 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 Whole School Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and action taken to eliminate these. In addition, we will:

- monitor exclusions by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. Action is taken to address any disparities between different groups of pupils;
- take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a pupil for a reason related to any disability they may have.

# PART 2 – Single Equality information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty

## Fairfield Primary School

### 1. Our School Profile

Fairfield Primary School is a large, two-form entry primary school situated in Cockermouth, Cumbria and is part of the Learning for Life Trust. The number on roll is currently 399 pupils (221 female: 178 male [January 2021]). The roll of the school is likely to increase with the developments of housing estates in the town and the school's positive reputation both locally, regionally and nationally. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals (FSM) is 8%, well below the national average of 15.4% (2019 DfE stats).

8% of our pupils have special educational needs; there is a mix of gender. We have several vulnerable groups including those with special educational, learning and medical needs.

A high percentage of our pupils enter the school from our nursery, private nurseries or other settings other than the home. The remainder enter school direct from home at reception age. As a result, attainment and maturity is wide-ranging. To address this inequality, we have worked closely with pre-school settings building in regular visits by members of our staff. In the term prior to starting school in September, all children who had applied to the school for a place were offered visits to the school and stay and play sessions. This allowed them to settle into the school environment and allowed the EYFS staff to get to know the pupils, to make initial assessments and form relationships prior to the start of the new school year.



Our catchment area comprises primarily of the town of Cockermouth (although some children travel from neighbouring villages to be educated at Fairfield Primary School). There are sufficient amenities available locally. The immediate area is relatively prosperous, with many of our parents/guardians working in the education, nuclear and medical sectors. There are a small number of ethnic minority pupils. A percentage of our pupils come from outside our official catchment area. They are attracted to our school because of its reputation, extended facilities, enriched curriculum and opportunities. We have a Wraparound care facility which operates from 7.30am each morning and the same provision is available after-school operating until 6.00pm each evening. Over an average week, over 35% of the pupils use this popular facility.

When we are aware of pupils who are joining the school with disabilities, we arrange to meet both the pupil and the parents and involve professionals from the Local Authority and the Health Authority to ensure that any adjustments required to provision and/or the school building are made in readiness for the pupil starting school. The school has fully ramped access in all main outdoor areas and has lifts to upper floors for wheelchair users. Our reception area is accessible to disabled people. We have two access toilets on site, which also contain an adjustable changing bed for use by those pupils who need personal care whilst at school.

4% of our pupils have English as an additional language.

Information for parents and others is provided in written and verbal form. All information is offered in alternative formats on request.

*\*Statistical data obtained from the January 2021 Census.*

## 2. Disability Equality Duties

Our commitment to disabled pupils, their families and staff's equality has a number of objectives:

We will promote equality for disabled people by:

- removing barriers to accessibility, particularly in relation to education, employment and access to services, information and buildings;
- encouraging good practice by our partners through our advisory capacity;
- ensuring we take their needs into account when procuring goods and services from our providers;
- promoting positive images of disabled people;
- challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes;
- making the environment as safe as possible for and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of, disabled pupils, staff and families.

We plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils by:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- increasing the inclusion of positive images of disabled people across the curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils, to the standard of which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled;

We welcome the requirements of the Disability Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. Our Scheme shows how we promote disability equality across all areas of the school, to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users.

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind. The plan is available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request. Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan. Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all pupils. We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum. Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities. For example, as part of our PE curriculum, children participate in wheelchair basketball sessions led by a world wheelchair basketball champion. On a regular basis, subject leaders review aspects of the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils, this includes using concrete manipulatives and practical resources to aid development. At Fairfield, we have a range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, which we ensure are accessible to all (this includes clubs, trips and residential). When using external agencies for educational delivery, we proactively ensure they fully comply with legislation to ensure that the needs of all children are met.

Moreover, progress is tracked termly, for all pupils, including those with a disability. In response to progress, targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs. Additionally, staff are regularly trained and informed to enable them to meet the needs of children with a range of SEN. We are continuing to review staff training needs and are proactively aiming to provide more CPD opportunities and training for members of the school community as appropriate.

We have a proactive SENDCo (Mrs. H. Birkett), who is fully trained and keeps fellow practitioners up-to-date on changes to legislation and national guidance. Our SENDCo is fully involved in the review of the needs of children and provides support for staff as and when needed; she is also part of our school pastoral team. Any new starters to our school have their needs analysed to ensure that they can access the



curriculum fully. In addition, the school is committed to early identification of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties before such difficulties lead to underachievement, disaffection and exclusion. As a school, we prioritise early intervention, target-setting and regular monitoring of disabled pupils.

The current learning environment is adapted to meet the needs of pupils as required. This includes:

- Ramps
- Elevators
- Appropriate corridor and door widths
- Accessible toilet and changing facilities
- Wheelchair accessible resources.

Policy review always ensures that all policies consider the implications of disability access. We will carry-out an annual audit of accessibility of school buildings and grounds, each academic year. These audits will link to safeguarding and Health and Safety.

We always aim to provide specialist equipment to promote participation in learning by all pupils by assessing and understanding the needs of the children in each class and provide equipment as needed, these include special pencil grips, headphones, spell-checkers, sensory equipment, writing slopes etc.

Our school welcomes a diverse workforce and we wish for an ethos where potential and existing staff feel able to disclose any impairment that they have. This is not just for data collection purposes, but in order for the school to make any reasonable adjustments for this member of staff. All disclosures will be treated sensitively and confidentially. To aid this, school have suitable chairs and on-site disabled car-parking for staff.

As a school, we use a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. Where required, online information is provided in alternative formats. Further alternative formats can be made available. We always ensure that parents who are unable to attend school, because of a disability, can access parents' evenings. To further improve communication, we will purchase additional resources, such as a hearing loop, to be used at Reception for parents, guardians and visitors.

### **3. Racial Equality Duty and Community Cohesion**

We recognise that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people experience discrimination based on colour, race, nationality, religion and ethnic origin. Racial harassment and violence are one of the most serious consequences of racism, damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities.

The school will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist BAME people to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their education.

To comply with this duty, we will:

- keep accurate records of all ethnic and faith groups, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them;
- encourage dialogue between different racial groups on the appropriateness of our educational provision- this will be achieved by promoting our open-door policy and producing detailed information of our curriculum and enrichment opportunities on our school website;
- prevent racial discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups;
- encourage pupils and their families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life;
- use our support for the voluntary and community sector to promote good race relations;
- counter myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations;

- ensure the school staff and other adults working within the school, pupils and their families as well as our partners and the wider community fully understand the principles of good race relations.

At our school, pupils have opportunities to study issues relating to intolerance, prejudice, discrimination and racism, in-line with British Values and this evidence is centrally collated and monitored via our Grid Maker mechanism. Our pupils are taught about significant events with relevance to modern society. Our curriculum reflects the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the school, and of society locally, regionally and nationally. We are continuing to build on our resources to reflect the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally. Our resources portray members of all ethnic and cultural groups in ways which are positive and stereotypes are not reinforced. Moving forwards, we are aiming to build more opportunities into our whole school and class assemblies to promote race equality; this will include engaging with ethnic groups in the local area and establishing links within our wider school community.

We keep accurate information about the ethnic origin, first language and religious affiliation of all pupils and this is stored centrally on our SIMS records, in line with GDPR regulations. We pride ourselves on our extensive list of after school and enrichment activities all of which are available to all children- regardless of their background. Achievement, attendance and exclusions are monitored by ethnicity to ensure equal opportunity is instilled. Despite having a lower than average number of EAL pupils, all languages other than English, are valued and promoted and children learn MFL as part of their studies. Pupils also study etymology to appreciate how the English language is rich, diverse and has borrowed from other languages. Etymology study is an aspect of learning which we are continuing to prioritise.

Furthermore, at our school, all pupils are given opportunities to meet their religious needs, especially at the time of important festivals and pupils are allowed to dress and worship in ways which do not conflict with the cultural or religious conventions of the home (whilst taking due regard to the school's own uniform & health and safety policies). Linked to this, we take every attempt to meet the dietary needs of all pupils by working closely with Orian Solutions and by having comprehensive records of pupils, which are available to all staff.

At our school, members of all ethnic and cultural groups are warmly welcomed, valued and encouraged to play an active role in school life. We pool upon their expertise and experience to enhance enrichment opportunities for all of our pupils, including visits and visitors. This is something that we would like to continue to prioritise as this will help us to continue to promote race equality and provide positive role models to children.

As far as is possible, staffing will reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally and our PSHE/RE leader Mrs. G. Harris, will work in conjunction with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher on the priorities of the school ethnic community.

#### **4. Gender Equality Duties**

In accordance with our Single Equality Scheme, we welcome the requirements of the Gender Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation;
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all our functions.

On a termly basis, attainment and progress for boys and girls is closely monitored and more recently writing was identified as a school improvement priority. Through action planning and a review of the curriculum, we have seen an impact on overall levels of attainment and progress in writing but specifically an improvement for boys. This has been across school. Within our school population, we have a larger than average proportion of girls on roll. Recently, we have targeted girls' engagement within sport and representation in school competitions. This included girl's rugby, football and athletics. In turn, this helped to reduce stereotyping within competitive sport and we embed opportunities within the curriculum to

tackle gender stereotypes in relation to carers and role models. For example, within our History curriculum there is a gender balance between significant names studied. Moreover, as part of our successful STEM provision, we proactively promote female role models and have invited visitors from local establishments to talk to pupils about the array of opportunities available to them. Linked to this, on all of our pupil councils, we ensure that there is equal representation from both genders.

As part of our safeguarding duty, staff are fully trained in recognising and responding to signs of gender violence and domestic violence. The school engages with the Operation Encompass Scheme, which enables us to support victims. Due to our extensive pastoral care system, we are able to provide adequate and immediate support to pupils, who may suffer from gender violence, bullying or have witnessed domestic abuse within their household. The school is aware that such crimes can be perpetrated by both genders. Moreover, we have an extensive PSHE curriculum, which addresses gender issues such as sexual bullying and sexual exploitation (in a child-friendly way). Within assemblies, circle time and PSHE lessons, we commit time to responding to and discussing information children may receive from the internet, films, TV and other media where women are portrayed in a derogatory manner. We keep parents/guardians informed of such discussions and provide a wealth of information, in-line with our E-Safety practice, on the use of social media.

We will endeavour to retain a gender balance amongst the school staff as a whole and at various levels – for example the Senior Leadership Team. At our school, gender does not impact on pay; staff have equal opportunities for career progression. Additionally, all staff will be eligible to apply for job-sharing, career breaks and maternity or paternity leave.

Within daily classroom procedures, pupils will be listed alphabetically or by date of birth; registers will not separate boys from girls. All children, irrespective of gender, wear the same colours for their uniform and PE kit and are encouraged to line-up together and sit with one-another in class. Children are actively encouraged to make equal use of all the resources and facilities in the school and staff aid this by ensuring that boys do not dominate such resources as the playground, the climbing apparatus, the construction toys or the computers, and that girls do not dominate such things as the home corner and the dressing-up clothes in EYFS. Around the school, all stakeholders will be discouraged from using sexist language, and commended when they challenge such language: regular reminders will be given about this and all stakeholders will be reminded of the negative effects of sexist attitudes and language.

## **5. Religion and Belief Equality Duties**

We recognise that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong. Faith-based hate crime has been on the increase in recent years, developing a character that is distinct from race hate crime.

The school also recognises that a person's religious (or similar) beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility.

The school is committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and exclusion based on religion or belief.

Our school recognises the need to consider the duties which require us to assess the impact of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief or non-belief.

In order to comply with this duty, the school recognises that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong. The school also recognises that a person's religious beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility. The school is committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and exclusion on the basis of religion or belief. R.E. is taught as part of our curriculum as well as a focus on wellbeing through mindfulness, pastoral care and group reflection. Our assemblies provide opportunities for spiritual and moral development, as well as fostering a sense of community and identity; enabling everyone to share and celebrate achievement; to learn of different faiths and cultures; and promote the importance of helping and encouraging one another. As part of our ethos, we instil respect towards all beliefs and religions and implement enrichment opportunities in order to celebrate a range of festivals and faiths- this is an aspect which we are continuing to shape. Every effort will be made to ensure that new resources

show people of all ages, religions and backgrounds/ circumstances involved in a diverse range of activities, thereby challenging stereotyped ideas about what people can and should do. Within our library and classroom practice we will review the books available that portray stories and poems which challenge stereotypes and we will actively encourage more of these to be embedded within the curriculum and/or available for children to read.

Moreover, as part of our safeguarding responsibility, all staff are fully trained on PREVENT training and opportunities are taken to defeat religious stereotypes. In addition, any racial incidents are reported, recorded and immediately responded to in-line with our statutory policy and procedures.

These measures help to create an environment where individual voices are encouraged and valued, together forming a collaborative community where all pupils, staff, parents and governors work together to bring out the very best in each other. Respectful, tolerant and brave, our pupils have the confidence and resilience to encourage each other to overcome adversity and speak out for what is right.

## **6. Sexual Orientation Equality Duties**

We are committed to combatting discrimination faced by all members of the LGBT+ community. We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBT+ people across services and employment.

We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about LGBT+ communities, both internally and to the community as a whole.

Our school recognises the need to protect pupils from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to taking a proactive approach to preventing all forms of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to LA and national guidelines and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Within our school, children are discouraged from using homophobic language and language that makes fun of people because of their sexual orientation. Moreover, pupils are discouraged from using offensive language of any kind and they will be commended when they challenge such language. Any homophobic incidents are reported, recorded and immediately responded to in-line with our statutory policy and procedures.

Through our extensive curriculum promoting equality and celebrating diversity, we take opportunities to ensure that appropriate language is shared and discussed with pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that resources show people of backgrounds/ circumstances involved in a diverse range of activities, thereby challenging stereotyped ideas about what people can and should do. An example of this is the topic of 'my family'. Within the teaching, photographs are shared of same-sex parents and discussed openly with the children. This helps to ensure that pupils see how all family backgrounds are different but must be respected and not discriminated against. As part of our PSHE curriculum, realistic images of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people and the contributions they have made to different aspects of the curriculum are shared and celebrated- this is an aspect which we are continuing to prioritise. We recognise that homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying is widespread in Britain's schools. The impact can be detrimental to the attendance, attainment and mental health and wellbeing of young people. Therefore, we are Stonewall Champions. Stonewall is a charity supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. As a school community we are committed to tackling all forms of bullying including homophobic bullying and we are committed to empowering staff to tackle homophobic bullying and language as well as educating and supporting our students. This is celebrated on our school website and safeguarding display boards. We also have connections to the charity Mermaids and as part of CPD, all staff have received training from trained representatives on supporting gender variant and transgender youth.

## **7. Pregnancy and Maternity Equality Duties**

We recognise that the Equality Act 2010 now specifically includes the need to protect female students who are pregnant or who have recently given birth from discriminatory practices.

This school will ensure that no student will be excluded purely on grounds of pregnancy and that up to 18 calendar weeks authorised absence period immediately before and after the birth may be given to ensure that the student is reintegrated into education as quickly as possible.

Female staff are already covered under existing employment legislation.

Such a student is protected from discrimination because:

- she is or has been pregnant;
- she has given birth and unfavourable treatment occurs within a period of 26 weeks beginning on the day she gave birth;
- a female student is protected even when the baby is stillborn, so long as she was pregnant for at least 24 weeks before she gave birth;
- both direct and indirect discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity relate to the person being disadvantaged and treated unfavourably.

In the event of a pupil pregnancy, we will work the child, their family and wider agencies to provide support to ensure the expectant mother has equal opportunity to fulfil their education.

## **8. Publication of the Single Equality Scheme**

Our School Single Equality Scheme is published as a separate document and is published fully on our website. Part 2 will be reviewed annually in line with the new intake of pupils; Part 3 will be reviewed at least every 4 years. Upon request, we will offer the document in other formats / languages as appropriate.

## **9. Complaints**

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or being treated unfairly by the School because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class they should report this without fail through the School's Complaints Procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance Procedure, as appropriate.

We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviours. Complaints about staff will be investigated using the appropriate procedures.

Monitoring complaints is also an alternative method of gathering information to establish whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report regularly to the Local Governing Board on complaints made and action taken.

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## Part 3: Equality Objectives (2021 – 2025)

### Equality Objectives Plan

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected Characteristic/ Equality Group	Aim	Objective	Target Group (s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc.	Action	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Indicator of Achievement
All aims of duty	All	To increase pupil, staff and governor awareness of legal and human rights and the responsibilities that underpin society	For pupils to understand they have rights, how they can exercise their rights and understand how rights link to responsibilities	All pupils and staff	To increase awareness of the School Single Equality Scheme across all groups within school and how it affects everyone	Senior Leadership Team, staff, Governors and Trustees.	March 2021 – December 2021	Pupils, staff and Governors are aware of the school's objectives and action plan (age appropriate)
All aims of duty	All	To equality impact assess all policies procedures and practices with emphasis on the attainment levels of pupils and students from vulnerable groups	To enable the school to address the needs of diverse and vulnerable groups at risk of disadvantage and set priorities accordingly	Whole school	Undertake Equality Impact Assessments on those policies, procedures and practices which remain outstanding to ensure that all pupils are making expected progress	SLT	April 2021 - on-going	All policies, procedures and practices equality impact assessed and action points identified and recorded  Pupils make at least expected progress irrespective of their background
All aims of duty	All	All staff receive CPD on the school's arrangements to promote equality in the context of their job role (e.g. mid-day supervisory – positive ethos and preventing/managing incidents. Teachers – curriculum and teaching and learning strategies)	School staff can identify the specific actions and behaviours needed to promote equality in the context of their job role and the impact of this assessed as part of the overall review of policies, procedures & practices in school	Whole school	Identify either in-school or external training providers who will assist with different or alternative strategies.  Identify any gaps using gap analysis tools	SLT	September 2021 - on-going	Evaluations of CPD indicate an increase in staff confidence and competence.  Observations of teaching and learning include strategies to promote equality and narrow the gap outcomes
All aims of duty	All	Improve displays and other images in the school to reflect and promote diversity in terms of the equality groups	For pupils to have positive visual images throughout their education which show and promote diversity	All staff, pupils and visitors	Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity	All staff	March 2021 – on-going	More diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups. Increase in pupils' participation,

								confidence and achievement levels
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race/ Religion or Belief/ Disability	To ensure the content of school meals and the eating environment meets the need of all race and faith groups and those with specific health needs	Increased take-up of school meals	All those with specific race, faith, cultural and health needs	Establish a school food group including representation from diverse groups  Introduce food culture days with different menus	Orian Solutions	September 2022 – July 2025	Increased take-up of school meals – variety in types of school meals served to reflect differing cultures
Eliminate stereotyping	All	To reduce stereotyping relating to race, sexual orientation, gender and disability by celebrating contribution and celebrating diversity.	For pupils to have literature throughout their education which celebrates and promote diversity and challenges stereotypes.	Whole school	Review the books available that portray stories and poems which challenge stereotypes.  Actively encourage more of such literature to be embedded within the curriculum and/or available for children to read.	SLT/ Miss. R. Edminson (Reading Lead)	May 2021- on-going	Resources successfully used and sufficient evidence (via Grid Maker)
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Sexual Orientation/ Race/Gender identity/ Disability/ Religion or belief	To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying	Pupils/students feel safer as they are assured that incidents will be dealt with promptly and fairly  Increased staff confidence  Accurate reporting rates	Whole school and specifically vulnerable and equality groups pupils/students or those from a faith background	To review and update existing policies and procedures relating to bullying using the Equality Impact Assessment method  Access staff training  Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging homophobia and transphobia.  Promotion of hate incident recording to pupils/students.	SLT/Mr. J. Gale	April 2021 – December 2022	Staff attend anti-bullying training
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation  Fostering and improving good relations	Sexual orientation	To prevent and reduce the possibility of homophobic language and bullying	Reporting rates of LGBT bullying decrease	Whole school	Utilise Stonewall School resource in PSHE  Celebrate (LGBT+) History Month (February)  Create a bank of realistic images of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people and the contributions they have made to different aspects of the curriculum  Complete Stonewall refresher training	Mrs. G. Harris (PSHE Co-ordinator)  Mr. J. Gale and Mrs. H. Birkett (SENDCo)	September 2021– on-going	Resources successfully used and sufficient evidence (via Grid Maker)  Training successfully completed



Advance equality of opportunity	Gender	To continue to ensure that girls are equally involved in physical activity	Further improved participation of girls in targeted sports activities	Girls	Monitor attendance of girls at out-of-school hours sports clubs  Survey girls and understand any potential barriers to participation	Mrs. K. Mossom/Mr. R. Barton (PE Subject Leads)	September 2021 - on-going	Increase in number of girls taking part in competitive sports
Eliminate unlawful discrimination	Gender	To eliminate all stakeholders from using sexist language	All stakeholders refrain from using derogatory, sexist language	Whole school	All stakeholders will be discouraged from using sexist language  Commended when they challenge such language  Offer regular reminders on the negative effects of sexist attitudes and language	SLT	March 2021- on-going	Observations and reported incidents of sexism reduced in all areas of the school.
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race/ Religion or belief	To prevent and reduce the possibility of racial prejudices and associated behaviour  To celebrate race diversity	For pupils to have positive role models from different ethnic backgrounds to show and promote diversity  To broaden pupils' minds and understanding of different faiths and beliefs	Whole school	Establish more community links in order to implement further enrichment opportunities to celebrate a range of festivals and faiths  Invite more visitors from different ethnic backgrounds and pool upon their expertise and experience to promote race equality and provide positive role models to children  Continue to emphasise the important of etymology study  Continuing to build on our resources to reflect the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally	SLT  Mrs. G. Harris (PSHE Co-ordinator)	September 2021- July 2025	Photographs and evidence within children's books  Events on the school website show an increase in visitors and visits to promote race equality  Medium term-planning shows planned visits/visitors and etymology study  Displays reflecting etymology and how English is a rich and diverse language  Resources successfully used and sufficient evidence (via Grid Maker)
Eliminate unlawful discrimination	Disability	To further improve communication  To ensure that our site is fully accessible to all	For all stakeholders to be able to access school provision in a safe and supporting manner  For pupils with a disability to feel	Whole school	Purchase additional resources, such as a hearing loop, to be used at Reception for parents, guardians and visitors  Carry-out an annual audit of accessibility of school buildings	SLT  Mr. J. Gale/ Mrs. C Parker	March 2021- on-going	Hearing Loop available in Reception and signage displaying this  Evidence or audit completion and associated actions

		To fully support pupils' needs	supported by the practitioners working within their year group  Increased staff confidence		and grounds, each academic year-linked to safeguarding and Health and Safety  Continuing to review staff training needs and proactively aim to provide more CPD opportunities and training for members of the school community in relation to SEN and medical needs	(H&S Co-ordinator)  Mrs. H. Birkett (SENDCo)		Training successfully completed
Advance equality of opportunity	Other	To improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals  To ensure that all pupils eligible receive free school meals	Improved attainment  For pupils to receive a nourishing meal each day	Children eligible for free school meals	Collate and analyse data relating to attainment by target group  Launch the new Pupil Premium Strategy and monitor impact  Be proactive in sharing information regarding free school meals	SLT	March 2021– July 2023	Improved attainment levels of pupils eligible for free school meals
<b>Date Action Agreed:</b>		24/02/2021			<b>Date Agreed for Review:</b>		01/02/2022	

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## Key Legislation

### EQUALITY ACT 2010

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation and provides changes particular to Schools.

The Act protects staff, pupils and others from discrimination and harassment based on ‘protected characteristics’:

- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Age (staff only)
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

This relates to:

- Prospective pupils
- Pupils at the school
- In some limited circumstances, former pupils

### **Public Sector Equality Duties**

Public sector equality duties are legal requirements on public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people with different protected characteristics when they are exercising their public functions.

The purpose of the Equality Duties is not to be process driven and bureaucratic but rather an outcome based method of ensuring that schools are best meeting the needs of all their pupils. Prior to April 2011 maintained schools and Academies were bound by the three public sector equality duties to promote disability, race and gender equality.

The Equality Act 2010 introduces a *single* equality duty on public bodies. The single equality duty came into effect in April 2011 and has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies will be required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

### **New Protection in Schools**

Protection against discrimination is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or have recently given birth, or who are undergoing gender reassignment.

### **Health Related Questions for Job Applicants**

It is now unlawful for employers to ask health-related questions of applicants before a 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. DfE are considering the implications of this in relation to existing guidance for schools on establishing fitness and ability to teach (as required by the Health Standards (England) Regulations

2003). In the meantime, 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 2010. Schools may decide to ask necessary health questions after job offer. In any case, they should ensure that any health-related questions are targeted, necessary and relevant to the job applied for.

### **Positive Action**

New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the needs of, pupils with protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. Previously a school providing – for example – special catch-up classes for Roma children or a project to engage specifically with alienated Asian boys might have been discriminating unlawfully by excluding children who didn't belong to those groups.

### **Victimisation**

It is now unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling.

### **Auxiliary Aids**

The Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. At the time of writing, the relevant provisions of the Act relating to this area had not come into force. Schools will be advised of when this is the case.

### **Publication of the Scheme**

Details of the school Scheme and the objectives must be published by 6 April 2012.

### **ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING**

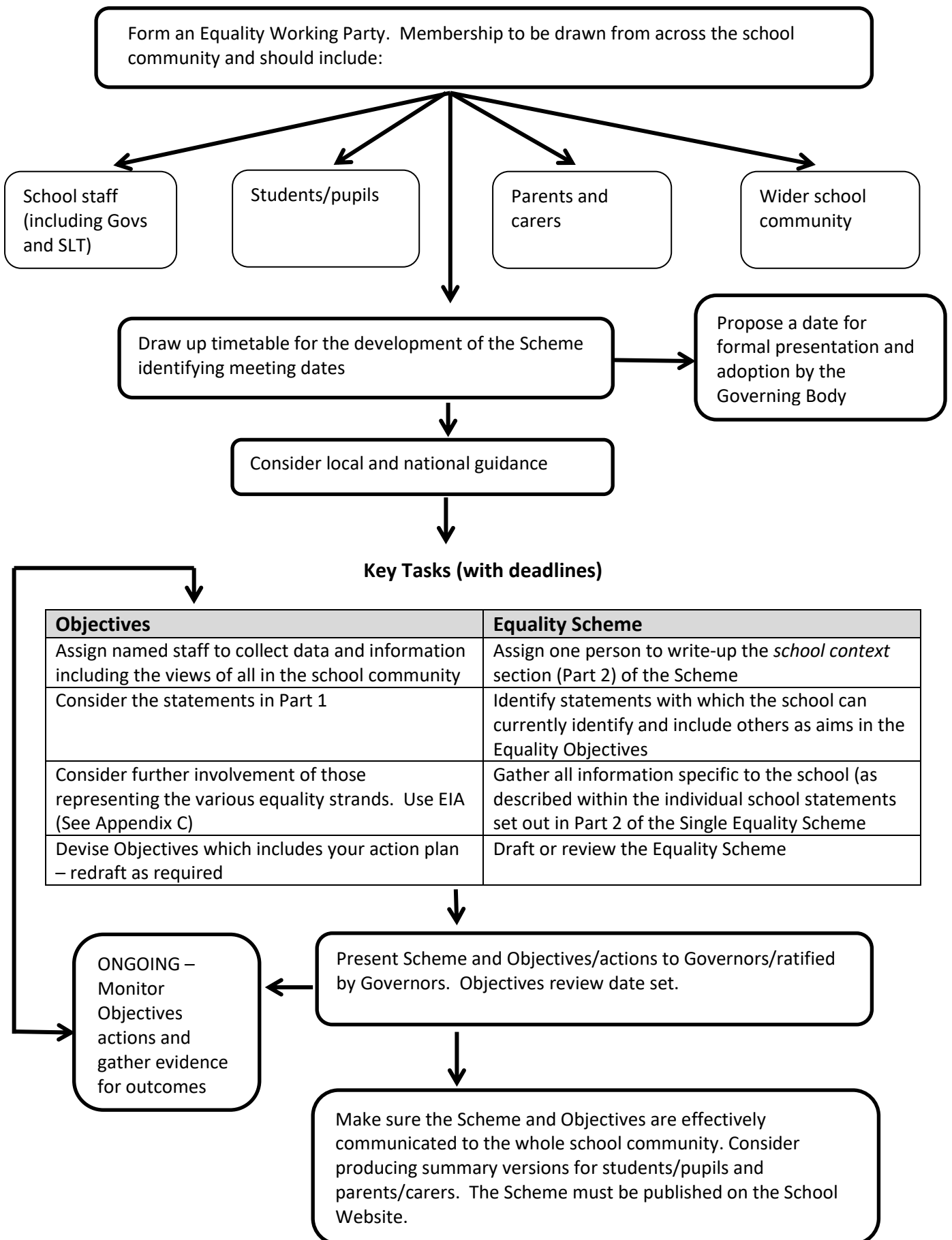
Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into the Single Equality Scheme. Your Accessibility Plan can, if you wish, be provided as an Appendix to the Single Equality Scheme.

Schools must plan for:

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

The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore, as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Equality Scheme.

**Process Chart for the Development and Review of Equality Scheme, Objectives and resulting actions**



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## Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) - Guidance

### *Some Frequently Asked Questions*

#### **What is an equality impact assessment (EqIAs)?**

To enable children or people within your school community to be treated fairly and equitably sometimes you must treat them differently. To identify how best to do this you have to think ahead and predict how to best serve the needs of the different groups within your school community. This is what equality impact assessment is all about.

Undertaking EqIAs is like undertaking health and safety risk assessments. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy or practice will be on a wide range of children or people with different and varied needs within your school community and trying to ensure they are not disadvantaged by it.

Your school community covers any person who is likely to use your school. This means pupils, parents, carers, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to your school. It also covers anticipating the needs of possible future members of your school community.

#### **What is meant by 'impact'?**

Two possible impacts are considered as part of the process:

##### **A negative or adverse impact**

This is an impact which could disadvantage one or more groups within your school community. The disadvantage which is highlighted may be greater on one group than it is on another group.

For example:

- An open evening for pupils and parents and carers which is held in rooms that are only accessible by stairs will prohibit anyone with a mobility issue from attending the meeting.

In some cases, the disadvantage may be unavoidable – such as the reorganisation of a service to save money. EqIAs provide the opportunity to explore the disadvantage on different groups, question if the disadvantage is fair considering the circumstances and either find solutions or alternatives, or justify the decision in an open, transparent and informative way.

##### **A positive impact**

This is an impact that could be advantageous for one or more groups. This positive impact may be greater for one group than it is on another group.

For example:

- A targeted training programme aimed at developing women to be able to apply for leadership positions in secondary schools would have a positive impact on women but would not, however, necessarily disadvantage men.
- An intervention programme aimed at raising the attainment level of underachieving boys in English would have a positive impact on boys, but it would not necessarily disadvantage girls.

Identifying positive impact is a good way of promoting equality and to share good practice for example, between departments or year groups and schools.

#### **Why should we undertake equality impact assessments?**

Undertaking EqIAs is a legal requirement for schools under current race, disability and gender legislation. The purpose of the legislation is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector bodies, including schools, by anticipating the needs of service users and removing potentially anti-discriminatory practices. In the case of schools, service users would include pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors, volunteers and visitors – anybody within your school community.



This means taking account of the needs of your school community in the development and review of any school policies and practices which are likely to affect them.

Undertaking EqlAs should not be a tick-box exercise. They should be considered a useful tool for mainstreaming equality into all our work. Services will improve through making improvements in the way policies are formulated and services delivered. This will enable barriers to be tackled and the needs of a diverse school population to be met. Your school community will also be aware that you are considering their needs at the planning stages.

### **What should be equality impact assessed?**

You need to assess school policies or practices which are likely to affect children or people within your school community.

Written policies may be easy to identify but EqlAs also apply to practices and customary ways of doing things, even if they are not written down (e.g. arrangements for parent consultation events, arrangements for pupil extra-curricular activities).

In accordance with legislative requirements, an EqlA must be carried out on all policies and practices whether they are existing, being changed or are being proposed.

It is also important to remember that this includes proposals to changes in organisation structures, budget proposals and capital projects.

For example:

- **Impact on workforce of organisational change**

All staff should be treated fairly and equitably through any proposed change to the workforce. You may need to consider whether any groups of staff will be adversely affected by the proposed change. It is also important to be aware of the outcome of any change on the workforce profile. You may need to address any identified under-representation in the workforce profile as part of any future recruitment activity.

Ensure the EqlA process includes the recruitment, selection and appointment procedures for staff.

- **Impact on service provision**

If there is likely to be an impact on the way a service is provided because of any organisational change, you then need to ensure your EqlA considers the proposed changes in relation to how your school community will be affected and whether any negative impact can be justified.

### **What equality strands/groups should be covered by EqlAs?**

Some groups may experience disadvantage, whether intentional or not because of characteristics specific to that group. These characteristics are known as equality strands. It is common practice to identify the characteristics into nine groups:

- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion and/or belief
- Age (in relation to staff recruitment /selection)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

### **Who is responsible for carrying out equality impact assessments?**

The person(s) who holds responsibility for the policy is ultimately responsible for ensuring an EqlA is undertaken. The EqlA may be done in conjunction with or by a person who knows that area of work.

It may be helpful to have a team of people who can help with the process. Try to get a mix of staff at different levels to get different perspectives. Ensure that they have enough knowledge of the area being assessed to make valid judgements.

To ensure ownership at the most senior level all EqlAs should be signed off by a member of the senior management team and a member of the governing body.

### **When should Policies/Procedures be equality impact assessed?**

All existing policies and practices should be reviewed on a three year rolling programme. It can be done in conjunction with the three year cycle of your own equality scheme.

By undertaking a policy mapping exercise, you can prioritise which policies and practices have a higher priority for EqlAs based on their likely proportionate impact.

To make sure that decision makers are provided full and clear information about policy or service implications, all new or proposed policies or practices should have an EqlA before they are implemented.

### **What happens as a result of an EqlA?**

If any potential adverse impact is identified then policies and practices may have to be made amended as a result. If any adverse impact could amount to unlawful discrimination the policy or practice must be changed unless there is an objective, lawful reason to justify this.

The results of EqlAs can be used to set equality objectives leading to improvement in services and practices. These should be placed within your equality action plan(s), for example ensuring relevant school policies can be made available in alternative formats, as required.

### **Do I have to do a separate EqlA for every similar policy?**

No – in fact it makes sense to review all similar policies together as part of an overall review. What you are looking for is how those different policies, as well as the way the policy is delivered in practice, are affecting different groups within your school community. If you think it would be more manageable to review a large policy or policy framework on its own then you can complete a separate EqlA – whatever makes the process manageable and meaningful for your school.

### **Do I need to do an EqlA on an adopted policy?**

No - you don't need to repeat an EqlA on an adopted policy which has already been assessed if any amendments you have made would not result in a different impact. If there are any doubts as to whether the policy has been assessed then the best route is to do your own EqlA.

### **Where can I obtain further information?**

Further guidance about undertaking equality impact assessments can be found at the Commission for Equality and Human rights website: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) or the DfE via GOV.UK: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality\\_Act\\_Advice\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)

