

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and Aims

1.1 Characteristics of our school

- **as a special school all of the pupils have special educational needs and many have disabilities as well**
- **we have a pupil group that contains members of ethnic minorities and traveller communities**

1.2 School values

OUR SCHOOL EXISTS TO;

- Support children and young people with Special Educational Needs to maximise their learning and social development within school, home and the wider community
- Provide teaching and learning in the most inclusive environment
- Work in close partnership with parents, carers and families
- Raise educational standards by providing through Individual Educational Plans clear targets for each pupil
- Ensure access to high quality teaching supported by multi-disciplinary team work utilising a range of specialist resources and facilities
- Support the professional development of all

OUR SCHOOL AIMS TO;

- Give each child a sense of personal value, promoting self-confidence and self-esteem
- Provide a secure, challenging and happy environment
- Prepare children and young people for as active, independent and autonomous life in society as possible
- Provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum (including the National Curriculum and the NLS and the NNS) differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils
- Develop pupils abilities in basic skills
- Work in partnership with the LEA to introduce and develop national and local initiatives
- Ensure success, achievement and progression for all pupils
- Create the opportunities and the environment for the experience of childhood to reach all pupils whatever their degree of learning difficulty

- Address the needs of the whole child and support their social and emotional development
- Support all staff and value their contribution to the educational process

1.3 Setting our priorities

Our priorities are:

- improving the involvement of disabled children and young people, staff and parents and carers;
- promoting positive attitudes toward diversity;
- improving the involvement of children and young people, parents and carers from minority ethnic backgrounds e.g. Gypsy Roma and Irish Travellers;
- improving access to information e.g. translation and interpretation to inform and engage parents/carers for whom English is an Additional Language;
- tackling bullying based on race, religion, gender, disability, sexuality or poverty;

1.4 Aims

We aim to:

- increase opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to play an inclusive part in their communities
- support families of children with disabilities
- provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- be a community that values diversity

2. Principles of Our SES

2.1 Purpose of the SES

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all students, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation.

The purpose of our **Single Equality Scheme (SES)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics', and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our **provisions, criteria and practices (PCPs)**.

Our SES enables us to meet the **duties** under equality legislation, and to achieve the following for all groups:

- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination;
- eliminate harassment and bullying
- advance equality of opportunity through vision, strategy and practice;
- foster good relations with all stakeholders
- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination
- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

- Take positive action to eliminate racial discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Through our SES we make links to all our actions and commitments to:

- promote community cohesion

2.2 A Relevant and Proportionate Approach

In promoting equality and complying with legislation we apply the principles of relevance and proportionality. We aim to ensure that our actions are **proportionate** to the equality issues within our school and **relevant** to our PCPs. This means we prioritise those actions that enable us to tackle the most significant issues with regard to equality in order to deliver the best equality outcomes. In doing this we focus on PCPs that have the greatest effect, or potential effect on different stakeholders.

We also apply proportionality in ensuring that our PCPs are **proportionate means of achieving legitimate aims**.

We ask whether our PCPs affect different groups in different ways and try to implement them in ways that promote equality. This is achieved through systematic **monitoring of outcomes, impact assessment** and **action planning** incorporating the fullest possible **participation of stakeholders**.

2.3 Participation

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

Our **working party** includes representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve. They are responsive to the diversity in our school and organised in such a way as to promote direct participation.

The school involves **stakeholders** including children and young people, staff, parents/carers and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account 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.

The views of stakeholders, trade unions and other equalities related groups are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

2.4 Anticipation

We apply the principle of the '**Anticipatory Duty**' in all aspects of our SES which means that we think ahead about how our PCPs may affect different members of our school. This is embodied specifically in the process of risk assessment where we consider not only the impacts but also the potential impacts, whether positive or negative.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the governing body discharges this responsibility through the Leadership Team (LT).

3.2 Leadership Team (LT)

The Leadership Team (LT) promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community;
- referring to relevant and up-to-date documentation from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC);
- ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability;
- sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school;
- working with trade unions to implement the relevant duties in employment functions;
- ensuring that action plans are undertaken for all protected characteristics;
- setting up the working party, with membership to include:
 - LT member
 - Governor
 - Parent/carer
 - Staff representative
 - SENCO
 - Trade union representative(s)
 - Associate members e.g. disabled children and young people, school council reps, community / voluntary groups and minority ethnic groups;
- ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately;
- Monitor the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions;
- In the event of expectations not being met, ensuring action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved.

3.3 All Members of the School Community

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of our community (staff, contractors, volunteers, children and young people etc) contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- contributing to the SES implementation and review process
- raising issues with line managers which have an impact or potential impact on the school's PCPs;
- maintaining an awareness of, and professional interest in, the school's current SES and the PCPs to which it relates;
- implementing PCPs in accordance with agreed protocols and standards;
- behaving with respect and fairness to all members of the school community

4. The working party

Our working party is involved throughout the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the SES. The Key Functions of the Working Party are:

- to ensure the involvement of the widest possible range of people representing the different protected characteristics;
- to ensure the involvement of trade unions regarding the equalities duties;
- to arrange for the gathering of information relating to all protected characteristics;
- to consider arrangements for impact assessments;
- to report to the leadership team on outcomes of information gathering and impact assessment;

5. Information gathering

5.1 Purpose and process

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

5.2. Types of information gathered

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme.
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- children and young people views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of the extended school offer by group;

- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- records of racial incidents;
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage;

6. Outcomes

Of all the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. We record our outcomes using a wide range of criteria, both academic and experiential, for the various protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups, mindful of the principles of proportionality, relevance and potential impacts (whether positive or adverse).

7. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed PCPs in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's PCPs are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

8. Action Plans

We have action plans covering all relevant protected characteristics. These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties

The action plans show:

- objectives and specific actions;
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);
- clear timescales;
- who has lead responsibility;
- resource implications;
- Specified dates for impact assessment and review.

9. Publication and reporting

The working party decides how best to publish the SES. The school provides a copy in a range of formats and actively makes it available to parents/carers and others, including those identified as difficult to engage. The school prospectus includes a reference to the SES and the values underpinning it.

10. Review

As part of the review of the SES, the school commits to:

- Revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SES and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;
- Using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SES informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans. This process continues to:

- involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;
- be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;
- Use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.

11. Summary of our most recent review: - See Equality and Diversity Action Plans

EQUALITY, SAFEGUARDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

St Nicholas School, in all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds and ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of membership of any group, including gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, ethnic or national origin, disability (physical or mental), religious or political beliefs.

St Nicholas School aims to:

- Provide equal opportunity for all
- To foster good relations, and create effective partnership with all sections of the community
- To take no action which discriminates unlawfully in service delivery, commissioning and employment
- To provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued.

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into the life of the school and be adhered to and be the responsibility of all staff.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Behaviour/Safeguarding

Community Cohesion

Curriculum policies. Teaching and Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Confidentiality/Whistleblowing

Safer Recruitment/Race Equality

Website management

Anti-bullying/reporting racial incidents/sexual harassment

Code of conduct

Equality and Diversity Action plans