



School Equality Policy

Sandgate School

Date agreed by Governors: 12th November 2019

Review Date: November 2022

Equality Statement

Our vision:

Achievement for all

Our Mission:

To fulfill this through developing every child's personality, abilities and talents to the full, to be the best they can be

This Equality Policy is intended to conform to the letter of the Equality Act (2010). The policy recognises that the school has a duty to remove discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, by integrating equality into the school's core priorities and functions.

This Equality Policy will inform our School Improvement Plan as this will enable us to:

- Demonstrate how promoting equality and eliminating discrimination can help raise standards
- Ensure that equality and diversity are part of the school's core business both as a school and as an employer
- Ensure that our priorities for raising standards support our equality objectives
- Ensure a safe place and environment for pupils, staff, parents and families.

To ensure success and meet the Public Sector Equality Duty the school will:

- Publish annual information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED]
- Publish Equality objectives and review them annually

What do we mean by Equality and Diversity?

Equality refers to outcomes, making sure that all social groups benefit equally from our activities. Diversity recognises that we can only achieve equality by taking into account the different needs of the population. Equality is impossible to achieve without recognising diversity.

What do we mean by a Protected Characteristic?

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the concept of a Protected Characteristic. This is an aspect, or characteristic, of a person's identity that is protected from discrimination. The concept recognises that we are all individual, however that our individuality is made up of characteristics we share with others. The following are the nine Protected Characteristics recognised by the Equality Act:

- Gender
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Pregnancy/Maternity

- Transgender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is a type of negative treatment that affects a whole group of people who share a Protected Characteristic, or an individual, because they belong to a group. In the Equality Act this is called a Protected Characteristic. Discrimination is shaped by social assumptions that feed into:

- The way people behave towards each other
- The way in which institutions operate

Discrimination gives rise to long term patterns of inequality in terms of:

- Educational attainment
- Employment opportunities
- Distribution of wealth and resources
- Health and mental health wellbeing
- Involvement in the criminal justice system
- Disengagement
- Potential radicalisation

Direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (real or perceived) identification within the 9 characteristics.

Indirect discrimination is when there are rules or procedures that have the effect of discriminating against certain groups of people within the 9 characteristics.

The Equality Policy at Sandgate School applies to staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers, visitors, and those connected with the school in the wider sense e.g. members of Family and Friends,

- The school expects that any external services offered through the school will comply with its Equality Policy.
- Staff, pupils, parents are consulted regularly regarding their views on the school in Annual Reviews, via surveys in school Council meetings and in forums.

- The Equality Policy will be promoted within the school community and feature on its website. The school will provide a copy for anyone who requests it and be available to explain it further if necessary.

- The Head teacher has responsibility for managing the Equality Policy and action plan.
- There will be an annual report to governors regarding implementation of the action plan, and this will also be published on the school website.

Profile of our school

The school, at the time of writing, has 94 pupils on roll. The school completes a Census bi-annually which captures the 9 characteristics.

All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan relating to their learning difficulties, In addition, many experience additional physical, visual or hearing impairments. Some pupils use wheelchairs, for part or all of the time, and both of the schools sites are fully accessible to them.

Student Council meets regularly, and are able to raise any matters for discussion, or share any concerns

The school at the time of writing, has 89 staff.

Cumbria in general experiences a smaller number of ethnic groups than many counties, and this is reflected within the makeup of pupils, staff and governors at Sandgate School.

Schools are expected to interpret the current legislation in ways which are appropriate to its own context, neighbourhood, history and circumstances.

Ethnicity Equality Policy

What are the key Race Equality issues for our school?

Continue to develop students' understanding of the racial diversity of the UK. As a predominantly white community both in school and in the local community this is particularly important.

What steps has the school taken to address racial incidents and racist bullying?

This is an area we will continue to monitor via the behaviour logging system. Any incidents would be logged and then logged at County level as in line with County Policy. The school has had no logs of racist incidents in the past two years.

What impact have we already had on race equality in our school?

- Students' home and cultural experiences are directly brought back into school, e.g. celebrations of Eid, trips to Bangladesh and Poland etc.
- The school R.E. curriculum routinely covers the major faiths of Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Hindu and Islam. The Art curriculum draws on a range of techniques and styles e.g. batik, screen printing, African masks and jewellery. The music curriculum features a wide range of musical styles and songs e.g. African call and response songs, Indian ragas and classical music, Chinese pentatonic style Jamaican folk songs, reggae, blues music, rapping, bhangra, gamelan. The Key stage 4 music option crosses into the end of slavery and growth of the Civil rights movement. The Modern Foreign Cultures curriculum covers a rotation of countries, looking at their music, art, food, traditions and culture.
- 1 staff member has had training on "Show Racism the Red Card".
- Drama, dance, history and social use of language sessions throughout the school are used to consider and challenge issues of fair/unfair treatment of people
- Resources are actively sought which reflect a range of ethnic backgrounds e.g. Persona dolls and small world people
- In 2015 the school achieved the Rights Respecting School Award at level 1, and Level 2 in 2017 acknowledging the rights of all children as stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Disability Equality Policy

Social and medical models of disability

One of our key goals is to challenge the view that the inequality faced by disabled people is down to their medical 'problems'.

The medical model has fed negative stereotypes held by non-disabled people such as:

- Focusing only on what a person cannot do.
- Making assumptions about what is best for the disabled person.
- Thinking that disabled people lack intelligence.
- Feeling embarrassed among disabled people.
- Bullying and harassing disabled people.



The social model focuses on the social environment and how it causes some people to be disabled:



With thanks to Stockton-on-Tees for diagram

What is a disability and how many disabled people are there in the UK?

Disability is any condition that affects a person in their day to day life. This can happen suddenly, for example as a result of an accident, or gradually as a result of a condition such as arthritis.

In the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) this is called an impairment. The DDA now recognises around 400 impairments including:

- Mobility impairments (requiring aids such as sticks or wheelchairs to move about).
- Sensory impairments (hearing or sight loss).
- Mental ill health (including depression, stress, Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia).

- Cognitive developmental impairments (including learning disabilities, dyslexia, and autism).
- Muscular impairments (including spinal injuries).
- Asthma
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Phobias
- Arthritis
- Acquired brain injuries.

Reasonable adjustments

The school is required to improve access to the curriculum, our buildings and our other services to disabled people. This also means that we need to take a proactive stance and anticipate what we may need in the future for disabled users.

The school has previously identified areas for development as part of its consultation regarding the DDA. The three key areas are Access to the Curriculum, access to the Physical Environment and Access to Information. The action plans relating to each area cover the school Access Plan, and will subsequently be incorporated as sub-strands within the Single Equality Duty action plan . Other relevant documents are the School Improvement Plan and Staff Handbook

Recruitment and Retention of disabled staff

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.

Disability and special educational needs

Not all pupils who are defined as disabled will have special educational needs. For example, those with severe asthma or diabetes may not have SEN but may have rights under the DDA. Similarly, not all children with SEN will be defined as having a disability.

What are the key issues for our school?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring extra-curricular clubs, residential trips and other educational visits provide opportunities from which all pupils can benefit, and providing specific further activities if required. • Ongoing review of external accreditation opportunities at 14-19 to ensure equality across the ability range. • Ensure pupils with profound and multiple needs, and others who continue to make very slow academic progress receive differentiated input within lessons, and a timetable to suit their needs. |
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- Developing consistent use of strategies which support the communication of students with autism.

What is our school's performance on Disability and attainment?

- The performance of all pupils is rigorously monitored each term. There is an expectation that all pupils will meet or exceed expected progress across a wide range of indicators.
- The school uses individualised assessment schemes which are custom – designed to allow the progress of different pupils to be recognised e.g. Sandgate Steps, Progression Pathway, SCERTs.

What steps has our school taken to address incidents bullying against disabled people or that promote stigma about disability?

Staff completed detailed behaviour logs regarding any incidents of concern. These are analysed on a weekly basis by SLT.

What impact have we already had on disability equality in our school?

- The school promotes its work and that of its pupils through its website, the school facebook site, and the local press to present positive images of what can be achieved by children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Projects are regularly held between Sandgate and QKS students to complete work together challenging stereotypes and breaking down barriers.
- Our curriculum involves significant work outside the confines of the school, within the local community and further afield, and this enables our community to become aware of what our pupils can do and achieve
- Our KS4 and KS5 classes, due to extend to KS3 in due course, are co-located with the Queen Katherine comprehensive school, and this enables a huge community of young people to become aware of the needs and similarities of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Gender Equality Policy

What is gender?

Gender refers to the social construction of female and male identity, rather than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued and used to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. Gender

identity is not always fixed and the Gender Equality Duty urges us to have due regard to the needs of transgender people.

Gender has a major influence on the ways in which boys and girls perceive themselves in terms of their identities, their aspirations for their future, and their expectations about how people should treat them. In Cumbria there are a number of persistent gender inequalities which could be influenced positively by a school adopting a conscious Gender Equality policy. These include:

- Attitudes towards domestic and sexual violence.
- Reduction of gender segregation in employment
- Reduction of gender gaps in attainment and reduction of gender preferences for specific subjects.
- Development of healthy lifestyles that prevent future health risks that males and females are likely to suffer from in later life.

What are the key issues for our school?

In some classes there are only 1 or 2 girls. It is important that classes timetable activities and cover curricular areas relevant to the range of pupils, and also facilitate cross-gender friendships to avoid social isolation.

Some pupils bring to school assumptions about the relative merits of different types of work, based on gender stereotyping.

What impact have we already had on gender equality in our school?

- There is more positive male to female balance than in many other special schools.
- The school seeks to overcome gender stereotyping through allocation of class tasks, consideration of stereotypical roles during work-related learning, and encouraging boys and girls to participate in whatever the curriculum has to offer (e.g boys respond well to dance and food preparation, girls to sports)
- Sexist bullying and use of sexist derogatory language, is not tolerated at Sandgate School, and if it were identified it would be dealt with in an effective and consistent manner by staff, with other staff made aware of the need to be vigilant through our whole school staff meetings.
- Boys and girls attainment are monitored through the school pupil progress tracking system. All pupils are expected to achieve that of which they are capable, whatever the subject/curriculum area.
- Boys and girls are encouraged to develop a diversity of role models, and in sex and relationship education older pupils address issues of sexual violence and gender inequality.

Sexual Orientation Equality Policy (Including Transgender)

Approximately 3% of the population are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. In Cumbria this is about 15,000 people. Developing an inclusive approach to understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment is critical to achieving Equality.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual young people have the same needs as all other young people - they want to feel safe, included and are able to fulfill their potential. The whole school should be involved in creating an atmosphere where everyone feels they can be themselves.

Homophobic bullying

Stonewall's 2007 research *The School Report* found that almost two thirds of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experience homophobic bullying in Britain's schools and 98 per cent hear phrases like 'That's so gay' or 'You're so gay'. School staff should also be aware of the consequences and what they can do. Stonewall's guide on *Challenging homophobic language and guidance*

Lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in the curriculum

The most effective way to prevent homophobic bullying and to ensure Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual young feel included and have the information they need to stay safe, is making the curriculum inclusive of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual issues.

Stonewall's 2009 report *The Teachers' Report* found that more than nine in ten secondary school teachers say Lesbian and Gay issues should be addressed in schools.

What are the key issues for our school?

Pupils developing confidence in exploring and expressing their sexual identity.

What steps has the school taken to address homophobic bullying or language and behaviour to reduce homophobia in society?

- RRSA Level 2 accreditation promoting rights, responsibilities and respect for all.
- British Values education programme of assemblies
- Same sex relations are covered within the sex and relationships education curriculum.
- Union noticeboard publications/

- No homophobic incidents have been reported.
- CPD on So Safe and LGBT

What impact have we already had on addressing Sexual Orientation and Equality in our school?

- Training already given on LGBT awareness has expanded the knowledge of staff in this area.
- One staff member is on the Northern Organising Forum for LGBT+ and attends training.
- Staff have attended Cumbria Pride events.
- School flew the Pride flag.
- Any staff who were considering Gender Reassignment would receive specific support from the school utilising best-practice guidance in relation to related issues.

Age Equality Policy

The Equality Act protects people from unfair treatment on the grounds of age. In terms of the school population, the Equality Act recognises that people aged below 16 can be treated differently and the Act is aimed at unfair treatment that is not justified by the policies of the school. This has particular application to staff employment policies.

There may be cases where a pupil's prime carers are teenagers, young adults, or grand parents, and that age equality can apply to norms and expectations that parents fit a standardised age group.

What are the key issues for our school?

Some of the siblings of our pupils are identified as young carers, some could be identified as such, and staff should be aware of the needs of the wider range of young people within the family.

Ensuring our young people are aware of their age-related rights eg voting.

What impact have we already had on age equality in our school?

Younger children are involved in decisions affecting them through the Student Council.

Requests for part-time working (which tend to be made by older staff, although not exclusively), are viewed positively, although the governors will have due regard to the balance of staff when considering such requests.

CPD opportunities are available to all staff, regardless of their career stage or age.

Religion/Belief Equality Policy

The Equality Act recognises that Religion and Belief as a Protected Characteristic. Whether a school is denominational or not, every school is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of its treatment of pupils, families and staff.

All policies need to ensure that they do not treat any person unfairly on the grounds of their Religion and Belief, and that where a person belongs to a religious minority, their faith is taken into account.

The policy also needs to treat atheists and agnostics on an equal footing to people who profess a faith. Also schools need to consider faith in relation to the curriculum.

What are the key issues for our school?

The majority of pupils' families identify as C of E or no professed faith. Staff must be aware of the specific needs of children and their families where families, for example, are Jehovahs Witnesses, or Muslim.

What impact have we already had on religion/belief equality in our school?

- Whenever the curriculum features faith and religion, or this arises owing to celebrations occurring at specific times of the year, staff present a balanced view at all times, and support pupils to unpick any unhelpful stereotypes should these be expressed.
- The school is flexible in meeting the needs of different faith groups, for example allowing exceptional leave for Eid celebrations, adapting the lyrics of the school prayer to include a Jehovah's Witness.
- Teaching aids promote awareness of the world's main faith groups.
- In class discussions, fair treatment is given to pupils who express no faith.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Equality Act recognises that Pregnancy and Maternity is a Protected Characteristic. Every school is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of its treatment of pupils, families and staff.

It is important to ensure that all policies do not treat any person unfairly who is pregnant or who has recently given birth and that the person is not discriminated on those grounds.

In the case of a school, no pupil will be discriminated against purely on the grounds of pregnancy. Up to 18 calendar weeks authorised absence period may be given immediately before and after the birth in order to ensure that the student is reintegrated into education as quickly as possible.

Female members of staff are already covered under existing employment legislation.

What are the key issues for our school?

That no pupil should be discriminated against because she has been pregnant, or if she has given birth and the baby was still born (as long as this was at least 24 week before the expected due date). The female pupil is protected against unfavourable treatment within a 26 week period from the birth of the baby and this includes any discriminatory behaviour because she is breast feeding.

This relates to both indirect and indirect discrimination.

What provision do we already have in place for female pupils who are pregnant or have maternity needs within our school?

The school has no experience of pregnancy of an existing pupil. However, should this ever be the case in future, the following principles would be adhered to:

- Quick re-integration to school
- Support to pupil and parents through the school pastoral system
- Sign-posting to services in the community which can support the family
- Personalisation of the timetable for the pupil

Good Relations Policy

This has now been incorporated into the Public Sector Equality Act as a Duty to Foster Good relations between people who share a Protected Characteristic and people who do not.

What is meant by good relations?

Good relations between people from different backgrounds exist when:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued
- Similar life opportunities are available to all
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in schools and our communities
- There is a coherent and robust policy on all types of bullying, along with specific measures to address bullying related to identity.

Schools and their communities

Good community relationships have to be owned by all organisations and community groups if it is to be effective. Schools belong to many different communities. Our school's communities include:

- the *school community* – our pupils, their families, school staff, school governors, users of the school's facilities
- the *local community* – our school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in the area
- the *UK community* – we are by definition part of this
- the *global community* – formed by EU and international links
- the *Sandgate at QKS community*- our pupils are part of the Queen Katherine community of students
- the *Kendal Collaborative Partnership community*- local schools working together for the good of all pupils within the area

What are the key issues for our school?

Ensure our community knows of the work of the school, views it positively and approaches to school for support are met

What impact have we already had on community cohesion in our school?

Teaching, learning and curriculum

- Promoting shared values
- Building pupils' understanding of their own identity and the diversity around them
- Having high expectations of all pupils
- Skilling pupils to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping
- Running a café in the community
- Assemblies which emphasise both individuality and commonality
- Global citizenship within the curriculum

- Joint working with QKS students on collaborative challenges and projects

Equity and excellence

- Analysing assessment results to identify performance of different groups
- Tackling underperformance by any particular group
- Removing barriers to access to the school for all groups

Engagement with extended services

- Building positive relations with different community groups
- Building meaningful partnerships with the local authority, parents, local community groups and voluntary groups eg local police officers have delivered a Safety in the Community sequence of lessons
- Enabling the pupil voice to be heard and enable change
- The school is used by the Kendal Drop-in Centre during school holidays and at the weekend to provide access to activities which support families and children.