

SEATON SLUICE FIRST SCHOOL

Equality Policy



PART ONE

Statement of intent

At Seaton Sluice First School, Governors and staff are fully committed to creating an environment which enables all pupils to fully participate in every aspect of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to work towards achieving their full potential.

We will facilitate this by:

- ✓ Taking responsibility and identifying the next steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for pupils with different needs and disabilities. This will enable our pupils to take as full a part as possible in the wide range of activities of the school. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the school environment and its activities are as accessible and welcoming as possible for pupils, staff and visitors to the school. We are also committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- ✓ Actively promoting positive attitudes towards pupils and staff, expecting everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- ✓ Regularly reviewing and carefully considering the ways in which the taught and wider curriculum will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- ✓ Have an ongoing culture where we regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high quality learning, good progress, promote common values and help pupils understand and value the diversity that surrounds them. We will actively challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- ✓ Collecting and analysing information about protection characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity.
- ✓ Not ask health-related questions to job applicants before offering a job, unless it relates to an intrinsic function of the work they do. We will make reasonable adjustments such as providing additional aids for disabled staff.
- ✓ The leadership team monitoring and assuring that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those for whom English is not their first language. Additional aids and services will be provided for them, where reasonable adjustments are required. By carefully risk assessing and planning ahead, staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits. The school will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure that no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- ✓ Seeking the views and guidance of advisory staff and outside agencies and partnerships with schools where this is needed. In planning the curriculum and resources, the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.

- ✓ Accurately recording, proactively managing and effectively monitoring bullying and prejudice related incidents to ensure they are dealt with effectively. Regular training will be provided for both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.
- ✓ Expecting that all staff will be ambassadors of equal opportunities, responding swiftly to bullying and dealing with it effectively and communicating concerns with colleagues. Discriminatory incidents will be effectively managed and staff will be able to confidently identify and challenge incidents of prejudice and stereotyping.
- ✓ Seek the views of the pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the school, to ensure that the school environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all users. We will regularly review our accessibility plans.
- ✓ Welcome a diverse range of candidates and encourage those who are currently under-represented to join.
- ✓ Ensure that all staff are aware of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>, the different forms of discrimination and what 'reasonable adjustments' means in practice.
- ✓ Include records of training and awareness as part of the school development plan which will be shared and reviewed by the Governing Body.
- ✓ Consult with stakeholders such as pupils, parents, carers, staff and relevant community groups or charities, to establish and implement plans based on information collected. These equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on an annual basis.

PART TWO

Our Legal Duties

Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010.

This legislation covers employment (work), the provision of services and public functions, and education.

Employers (schools) are liable for discriminatory acts of their employees if they did not take reasonable steps to prevent such acts. Employees can be liable for acts (where an employer took reasonable steps to prevent such acts).

The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are:

- **Age** - A person of a particular age (e.g. 32-year-old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 – 30-year olds). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- **Disability** - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

- **Gender reassignment** - A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment.
- **Marriage and civil partnership** – Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- **Pregnancy and maternity** - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.
- **Race** - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
- **Religion and belief** - Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination do not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
- **Sex** - A man or a woman.
- **Sexual orientation** - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

'Prohibited Conduct' (acts that are unlawful):

- **Direct discrimination** - Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** - A provision, criteria or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Harassment** - Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive

environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.

- **Victimisation** - Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a complaint) brought in connection with this Act.
- **Discrimination arising from disability** - Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) **and failure to make reasonable adjustments**.
- **Gender re-assignment discrimination** - Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purpose of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision such as sick leave).
- **Pregnancy/maternity related discrimination** - Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a woman or girl because she is breastfeeding.
- **Discrimination by association or perception** - For example, discriminating against someone because they “look gay”, or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative.

Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

Public Sector Duties (applies to schools):

A school must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to (in relation to protected characteristics above):

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
2. Advance equality of opportunity (remove or minimise disadvantage; meet people's needs; take account of disabilities; encourage participation in public life).
3. Foster good relations between people (tackle prejudice and promote understanding).

In practice, ‘due regard’ means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty, so decision makers in schools must have due regard when deciding, developing a policy or taking an action as to whether it may have implications for people because of their protected characteristics.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans (Schedule 10)

Schools are required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.

- Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will:

1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum
2. Improve the physical environment
3. Improve provision of information.

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The school will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the **relevant admissions authority** as appropriate.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a duty on all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion.

Aspects of educational legislation have also promoted equal opportunities, for example the Education Act includes a duty for local authorities to educate children with special educational needs in mainstream schools wherever possible.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure that the school complies with equality-related legislation.
- Ensure that the policy and its procedures are implemented by the Headteacher.
- Ensure all other school policies promote equality.
- Give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.

Headteacher

- Implement the policy and its related procedures.
- Make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Take appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff. It is unlawful for an employer to enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, 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. Schools should no longer require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire. Neither should a school seek out past sickness records until they have made a job offer.
- Ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

All staff

- Implement this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.

- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds.
- Attend such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.
- To be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions.

Pupils

Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

Visitors (e.g. parent helpers, contractors)

- To be aware of, and comply with, the school 's Equality Policy.
- To refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour (for example, racist language) on school premises.

Equality Objectives

The school's equality objectives have been established by looking at the most significant and meaningful equalities challenges we face.

They are:

Priority	Action Required	Success Criteria	Timescale	Responsible Person
To ensure that all pupils, regardless of economic circumstances attend and achieve well, particularly the more able, children in receipt of free school meals and those born in the summer months.	Monitor and address any attendance concerns, including acknowledging achievement. Plan, review and implement a range of interventions. Provide enrichment opportunities to inspire and motivate future aspirations.	Attendance rates will be above the national average and in line with the school's target of 96.2%. Pupil data will demonstrate good progress taking place across all groups of pupils, with impact of interventions evident.	Summer 2023	HT and DHT
To continue to develop the school's commitment to inclusivity, welcoming pupils with a range of	'The Lighthouse' ARP to be fully operational. Pupils from neighbouring schools (with EHCPs) to join SSFS and be	Pupils attending 'The Lighthouse' will quickly settle in school routines and will respond to	Summer 2023	Led by DH/SENDCO, SP and staff in The Lighthouse, All staff

SEND needs and disabilities into SSFS and ensuring they are able to access all aspects of school life. To establish a culture centred around the acceptance that everyone is unique and that we are all equal.	successfully integrated into school life and daily routines. Raised awareness of pupils and staff in relation to the needs of the children and how we can best support them and make the pupils feel safe, secure and welcome. For pupils who are able to manage, a blended timetable to be in place that supports integration into mainstream classes.	feeling accepted within the school community. Pupils across the school will understand the importance of supporting pupils with a range of SEND needs and their understanding will increase, as part of a naturally inclusive culture.		
Where evident, to narrow the achievement gap between boys and girls in the school.	Ongoing assessment of pupil's learning/progress. Interventions reviewed and considerate of pupil interests and ways of maximising levels of motivation and behaviour for learning.	There will be no trend across the school in terms of boy and girl attainment. Progress will be evident for all pupils across a range of abilities including pupils with SEND.	Summer 2023	All staff Monitored by SLT
To promote an increasing understanding of different cultures and celebrate the diversity of our world.	Additional cultural opportunities to be planned in and delivered within school, including arranging visits to religious establishments.	The school will plan enrichment activities, visits and themed weeks based around culture and diversity.	Summer 2023	Led by LB Promoted and delivered by all staff. Planned in by class teachers