



# Equality & Diversity Policy

## Introduction

The Shire Multi-Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community are respected, valued and are able to achieve their full potential. This policy has been developed in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 and takes account of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The policy replaces all earlier policies relating to gender equality, disability equality and race equality.

## Aims

The aims of our policy are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

## Purpose

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of nine protected characteristics:

- gender
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation

- pregnancy or maternity
- age
- marriage or civil partnership

In addition to the nine protected characteristics, the school is also mindful, in light of the composition of the school community, of the economic circumstances of pupils and their families and are committed to ensuring that this is also subject to the same protections. The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and publish equality objectives and information relating to compliance with the Equality Duty.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The Shire Multi-Academy Trust values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning British values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

## **Principles**

We are guided in our actions in relation to equality by the following key principles:

### ***Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.***

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity.

### ***Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.***

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless

take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity

***Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.***

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

***Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.***

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

***Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.***

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

***Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.***

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve, as far as possible:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and both girls and boys.
- homosexual people as well as heterosexual people

***Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.***

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and both girls and boys
- homosexual people as well as heterosexual people

***Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence.***

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives. Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

***Principle 9: Measurable objectives***

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8). The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. Our equality objectives are integrated into the school improvement plan. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

**Policy Development**

In developing this policy and the associated Equality Objectives, representatives from a range of groups within the school community were consulted, these included:

- Pupils (via the School Council and Class Councils)
- Parents (via the Parent Partnership Group)
- Staff
- Governors

An Equality Working Group will also be established to lead on promoting and ensuring equality within the school and to lead on the implementation of the Equality Objectives. This will include representatives of all of the above groups.

### **Sharing the Policy & Equality Objectives**

All members of staff will have access to the policy via the school's Shared drive and via e-mail. A policy leaflet has been written to accompany this policy and to provide an overview of the key information for parents. Both the policy and the overview will be available to parents and members of the wider community via the school's website. Copies of the policy leaflet will be available in the school entrance and paper copies of the full policy will be available on request from the school office. Key information from the policy will be shared with the children via the School Council, during school assemblies and through the PSHE curriculum. All members of the school's governing body have received a copy of the policy via e-mail.

The Equality Objectives will be shared with parents in the school's newsletter and an annual update will be provided in the same way. The objectives will also be publicised on the school website. Representatives from the aforementioned school groups will be involved in the regular review of the objectives and the policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Arrangements, Roles & Responsibilities in Relation to the Policy**

- The equality objectives for Sandhill Primary School are set out in a separate document which is appended to this policy. They will be reviewed annually, and refreshed on a four year cycle.
- Equality employment information will be monitored and reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.

- The Shire Multi-Academy Trust will undertake Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) exercises when renewing or reviewing policy or practice to ensure full compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

### ***Curriculum***

- Curriculum information will also be evaluated by looking specifically at equality groups in addition to the standard analysis conducted by the school and adjustments as appropriate to ensure that equality groups are supported positively.
- All other data relating to whole school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that groups are supported positively.
- When it is reviewed, each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our Guiding Principles as set out above.

### ***Staff and Governors***

- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
- A member of the Governing Body has the role of monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
- A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of this policy.
- All staff are expected to:
  - adhere to this policy
  - promote equality and inclusion in their classrooms, amongst colleagues and with visitors to the school

- deal with any prejudice related incidents that may occur
  - plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect our Guiding Principles
  - provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of equality groups and any issues that may arise, e.g., attendance, bullying, exclusion
  - undertake or support Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) processes
  - attend appropriate training that enables Sandhill Primary School to keep up-to-date with equality issues
- All staff and Governors have access to training and a selection of resources which discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion. We value the opportunity to take a holistic approach in fulfilling our Equality Duties.
- All staff and Governors will exercise their Safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of Human Rights is addressed immediately.

### **Monitoring the Implementation & Impact of the Policy**

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We recognise that the strength of this Policy depends upon ensuring that everyone is actively implementing it, and that gaps and the need for further development will arise from effective evaluation.

The school will collect and analyse evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

The school has a rolling programme for reviewing policies and their impact. In-line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire Policy and accompanying Action Plan on a four year cycle. Completion and discussion of the Checklist for Staff and Governors below will inform the review, and pupils and parents will be consulted on how the policy is working and how it could be improved. All aspects of inclusion and equality will be reported via the school website and newsletters.

Approved by the Governing Body on July 2015

Policy Review Date: July 2018

**Signed:**

Chair of Governors: Paul Micklethwaite

Executive Headteacher: Judith Hirst