



Single Equality Scheme 2021 – 2024

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Please refer to the separate “Single Equality Action Plan” (previously called Appendix A)
Please refer to the separate “Accessibility Policy and Plan” (previously called Appendix B)

For further information, or to request this Scheme in an alternative format, please contact our school office.

Reviewed June 2022

1. Introduction

We welcome the equality duties on schools, and our school values and learning behaviours encapsulate the ethos and principles of equality.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their full potential regardless of background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a school community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our learners, staff, governors and parents in particular. Throughout this Scheme, ‘parents’ can be taken to mean mothers, fathers, carers and other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by

- Active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but also in its review and implementation
- Proactive leadership
- Prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
- Removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our Scheme includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years.

We recognise that improving outcomes such as attendance or attainment for a specific group of pupils will help to improve our outcomes for all. Our commitment to equality is thus a fundamental part of our drive towards excellence.

School Ethos

St Mark’s CofE Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. The school opposes all forms of racism, prejudice and discrimination. The school supports diversity and promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school. All staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual trust among pupils from all ethnic groups. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that all forms of bullying, including religious, racist, sexist and homophobic, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with LEA policies and guidance. All incidents of bullying are recorded and dealt with in line with relevant school policies. The school’s anti-bullying policy is reviewed regularly.

Overarching statement

Equality of opportunity at St Mark’s CofE Primary School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community—pupils, staff, governors and parents.

2. National and Legal Context for Diversity

All schools have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must have due regard to

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability- related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

The disability equality general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it complements, and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments.

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

Schools also have specific duties under these three promotional duties. This Scheme demonstrates our response to both the general and specific duties. Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. There are no statutory requirements for schools to have a policy or action plan for promoting community cohesion. However, we have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty. Although there are no equivalent promotional duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, we must ensure that we do not discriminate on. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

3. School Context

St Mark's CofE Primary School is a large size school, serving the areas of Beggarwood and Hatch Warren in Basingstoke. The vast majority are of White British origin; 14% come from minority ethnic groups. 4% of pupils have English as an additional language. The number eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years is below national levels (10% vs 25%). The proportion of special educational needs pupils is below the national average (13% vs 16%), with pupils' difficulties predominantly relating to moderate learning, speech language or communication needs, or SEMH. Multiple pupils have EHCPs. St Mark's runs The Bridge, a resourced provision which caters for 7 pupils with SEMH.

4. Involvement of staff, pupils, and parents

We always seek feedback and inclusion from our school community. This is carried out through:

- involvement of the school council
- invitation for all stakeholders to become involved, where appropriate
- use the school newsletter to update and inform all stakeholders

These activities will involve disabled people, people from different ethnic communities and gender. We will

- seek feedback and representation from both genders from the disabled and ethnic groups from within and outside the school community
- involve the school council in tackling inequality and under representation where we find it
- use data to analyse areas of inequality and under representation, and address issues quickly where we find them.

As a result of these activities we will identify gaps and prioritise actions to address them.

Ongoing involvement

We have strategies in place to promote the participation of pupils in decision-making and in making a positive contribution to school life. We will embed equality and inclusion into these strategies so that learners from diverse backgrounds are involved in shaping provision and improving practice. We ensure that outcomes from these involvement activities are acted upon by the school's senior leadership team.

St Mark's places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work, and its aspirations are understood and acted upon at all levels ensuring that the experiences of all groups of pupils are positive. Incidents indicating intolerance are acted upon and records kept.

The school promotes good links with support services to ensure that the appropriate support is used to enable all learners to access the curriculum.

A designated teacher is responsible for multi-agency liaison to ensure that the needs of children in care and who are post-adopted are met appropriately.

The school articulates clear zero tolerance of all forms of bullying through its anti-bullying policy and participation in anti-bullying week each year. All stakeholders are proactive in recognising and reporting any incidents of harassment, however minor, directly to the leadership team.

Action Planning Process

5. Information gathering

We collect a broad range of qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our policies and practice and to demonstrate our progress in equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our single equality approach helps us to more effectively monitor our progress and performance, as our pupils and staff may face more than one barrier to achieving their full potential.

The information we gather is used to promote equality by embedding the evaluation of data, analysed by race, disability and gender, within the school self-evaluation report.

The leadership team and designated staff will take the lead in gathering, analysing and reporting equality information.

a) Pupils

We collect the following information:

- achievement and progression
- take up of extracurricular activities
- incidents of race discrimination or bullying
- attendance
- rewards and reflection forms
- participation in the student council

b) Staff

We collect the following information:

- staff composition
- disciplinary, grievance, competency proceedings where they exist
- performance and seniority

c) Others

- Visitors to the school who may speak to groups of pupils, or the whole school (e.g. in assembly time).

6. Specific Equality Areas

This section of our scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality.

a) Race Equality

What we have already achieved:

As a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, Level 1, St Mark's places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work, and its aspirations are understood and acted upon at all levels ensuring that the experiences of all groups of pupils are positive. All incidents indicating intolerance are acted upon and records kept.

All school abides by all current UK equality legislation.

b) Community Cohesion

What we have already achieved:

In teaching, learning and the curriculum, community cohesion is promoted by:

- Use of HeartSmart programme, which is a comprehensive PSHE and Relationships Education teaching programme.
- Where possible drawing on the religious diversity of our children to develop their understanding of faith
- Using resources which reflect human diversity.
- Using positive images and avoiding stereotyping.
- Accurately representing the history of women, men, other cultures and societies.
- Presenting a balanced view of social and economic relations in the world.
- PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and Citizenship programmes that recognise and celebrate diversity
- Children visit local places of worship through the RE syllabus, including our on-site church.
- The collective worship celebrates world faith events and raises children's' awareness of global issues.
- A pastoral curriculum and ethos which promote self-discipline, self-esteem and self-motivation.
- Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, reinforced by our Rights, Respect and Responsibility programme.
- Our close link with the charity 'Raising Hope Foundation', which is based in Ghana.

In Equality and excellence

We strive to ensure all pupils from different community groups have opportunities to reach their full potential, removing variations in learning outcomes through:

- The implementation of new National Curriculum Programmes of Study
- Agreed schemes of work and learning objectives.
- Differentiation of teaching methods, tasks and assessment criteria
- The provision of individual and small group support for pupils with learning difficulties.
- The monitoring and analysis of pupil groupings.
- The monitoring of pupil performance with appropriate feedback and target setting

- Specialist equipment will be made available to support the learning of pupils with special needs, as appropriate and as detailed in the Individual Education Plan devised for such pupils.
- Ensuring resources and equipment are equally accessible to all pupils, regardless of gender, race or disability.

In Engagement and extended services

Our school engages with the community to support extended schools provision, run directly or indirectly by the school:

- Our school is hired out to local community groups.
- We have close links with the local Hatch Warren Community Centre.
- We share our building with Immanuel Church, which is directly on the school site. The school was founded as a community school, not a church-focussed school.
- We run a range of after school clubs, as well as a morning breakfast club and after school club.

c) Disability Equality

What we have already achieved:

- Our building is accessible to pupils with disabilities due to the single floor design and ramp access throughout.
- Staff have undertaken specialist training to know how best to manage difficult situations should they arise. This includes restraint training and specialist medical training.
- The school articulates clear zero tolerance of all forms of bullying through its anti-bullying policy and participation in anti-bullying week each year.
- All stakeholders are proactive in recognising and reporting any incidents of harassment, however minor, directly to the leadership team.

d) Gender Equality

What we have already achieved:

- The school ensures resources and equipment are equally accessible to all pupils regardless of gender.
- The school selects positive images of both genders when delivering the curriculum and avoids stereotyping.
- The school accurately represents the history of both women and men.
- Attainment is analysed by gender and where there is lower attainment by either gender in a subject or activity targeted intervention strategies are implemented to redress the imbalance.
- The school council is composed of males and females.
- Our uniform policy is not specific to gender.

7. Impact Assessment

We will carry out equality impact assessments on our policy and practice which will cover all aspects of equality: race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We will look for ways to improve practice as well as ways to eliminate discrimination and harassment. We have a programme of carrying out impact assessments on our existing policies and practice and we will build the impact assessment process into all new policy development and decision making activities.

See Single Equality Action Plan for key tasks, timescales and review/impact statements.

8. Working in Partnership

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

The School Health Service or external companies are regularly accessed by termly medical reviews of pupils which help to ensure that medical problems are dealt with suitably. The school nurse provides annual training for epi-pens, asthma and diabetes. Pupils with specific health issues are dealt with sensitively and with full entitlement to the curriculum.

The Behaviour Support Team and special school advisors are used to support children, their families and our staff to enable children with behaviour and social needs to access learning.

The Speech and Language Therapy service is used for some of our children and individual SALT programmes are used as part of Learning Plans.

Use is made of the Occupational Therapist and the Advisory Teacher for the Visually or Hearing impaired.

We access organisations like CAHMS or Relax kids, or use professional counsellors and play therapists, to support children with mental health difficulties.

Full use is made of our EP to assist with diagnoses and the provision of intervention strategies and preparation of statements. The school accessed support recently when we were bereaved and sought support for a bereaved sibling.

Putting the Scheme into practice

9. Publishing the Scheme, raising awareness

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

- making it available on request
- Providing staff training to raise awareness of the legal duties and the implications for staff
- Ensuring that staff induction procedures include an introduction to equality legislation and information about this Scheme

10. Monitoring and evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan

We want this Scheme to be a 'whole organisational' document that drives forward equality and achieves improved outcomes. We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We will inform staff and learners of our progress annually.

We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan every three years to set new priorities and identify new actions.

11. Links with other school policies

There are multiple policies which the school has that include information regarding this policy. This demonstrates our commitment to ensure that we work out the principles of equality contained in this policy.

12. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will

- monitor the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, learners and parents
- Ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation
- Receive and discuss regular equality reports on progress and performance
- Monitor achievement of equality targets
- Check that implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan achieves improved outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

The head teacher will

- Provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- Ensure staff, pupils, parents /carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Scheme and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this Scheme
- Monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and Action plan
- Provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this Scheme

The senior leadership team will

- Drive forward implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- Support staff to carry out their role in implementing this Scheme
- Provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- Ensure the Scheme is successfully promoted
- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimization

All staff will

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and report these
- Highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities
- All staff will also ensure that students are encouraged to recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to
- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these