



Sefton Park Infants & Junior Schools Equalities Policy 2024-27

Purpose:

Sefton Park Infant and Junior Schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our pupils matter. We are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally. We are committed to meeting the legal duty set out in the Equality Act 2010. We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

Introduction and Context:

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It replaces previous legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Single Equality Scheme was set out in the Equality Act 2010. From April 2011, all schools are required to consider the 'General' and 'Specific' duties in promoting equality across the full range of protected characteristics, namely:

- Sex and/or Gender*
- Race
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics" but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

** **Sex** refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women/boys and girls. **Gender** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women/boys and girls, or personal identification of one's own gender. In some circumstances, an individual's assigned sex and gender do not align, and the person may be transgender.*

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public

Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties: the **Public Sector Equality Duty** or “general duty”.

This 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.

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:-

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

Community cohesion duty – *Education and Inspections Act 2006*

In addition to addressing the duties outlined above, our school is committed to taking action on other equality strands (e.g. religion and belief, ‘vulnerable’ children) and we will also work hard to meet the duty to promote community cohesion. We will increase our focus on helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action. We are committed to following DfES (Department for Education and Skills) guidance in providing:

- teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them.
- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- a programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of different communities.
- support pupils for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Links with other policies:

We ensure that the principles embedded in the Equality Act 2010 apply also to the full range of our policies and procedures, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- learners' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance

- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation:

- We always consider equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We ensure we adhere to the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
 - The Head Teacher ensures that all appointment panels follow this policy so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
 - We 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 take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
 - We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
 - Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender.

Behaviour, Exclusions & Attendance:

The school Policy on Behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing Prejudice & Prejudice Based Bullying:

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs.
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief.
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. There is guidance in the Anti-Harassment Policy on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups:

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions home visits.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate Literacy and Numeracy skills.

We collect and, analyse data:

- on the school population by factors such as: gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

Pupil Premium
Ethnicity
Free School Meals
EAL (English as an Additional Language)
All SEN (Special Educational Needs)
Looked after Children

- We collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as 'less able'.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensure we meet the needs of all pupils.
 - We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
 - We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
 - 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, for example:
 - disabled and non-disabled people
 - people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
 - girls and boys

- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- We have also implemented an Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantages faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives. (see Equalities Objective: 2024-27: Published on the school website)

What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
 - We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

Equalities Objectives: (see Equalities Objective 2024-27 - published as a separate document on the school website).

- We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected.
- The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues as appropriate.
- We continually review our equality objectives and report on progress towards achieving them.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The CCS (Care, Curriculum and Standards) sub-committee has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing 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.

The School development Plan will be written and reviewed with these objectives in mind. Members of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibilities for Inclusion, Achievement and Curriculum are responsible for ensuring that the principles of this policy are reflected in teaching and learning practices across the curriculum.

Reporting to Governors will form part of the school's monitoring arrangements.

A senior member of staff (Inclusion Lead) has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- o promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- o deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- o identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- o plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 5
- o keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious Observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data relating to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status and gender.

Review

This policy is due for review in September 2027

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary of legislative requirements

Appendix B: Check list for staff and Governors

Equalities Objectives - Appendix A

Summary of legislative requirements

The new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that will provide a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The **Equality Act 2010** has been drawn up to tackle inequality and prevent discrimination against people on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. It brings together several existing laws and aims to make understanding the law simpler. It also introduces a new single public sector equality duty, which requires public bodies to actively advance equality.

The duties set out in Chapter 1 of Part 6 of the Equality Act apply to all schools. These provisions protect pupils at the school and in the case of admissions, those applying or wishing to apply for admission. Former pupils are also protected from discrimination or harassment.

As a school, you must not:

- discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil because of their disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, religion or belief, or sexual orientation;
- harass or victimise a pupil or prospective pupil.

You must not discriminate against a person in relation to the following activities:

- admission to your school;
- the provision of education to pupils;
- access to any benefit, facility or service;
- exclusion from school;

by subjecting a pupil to any other detriment.

1. Reasonable adjustments for disabled people

Schools have a continuing duty to 'make reasonable adjustments'. This may involve treating disabled pupils 'more favourably' than non-disabled pupils. The duty contains three requirements:

- changing your provisions, criteria or practices;
- making changes to overcome barriers created by the physical features of the premises;
- providing auxiliary aids and services

2. Admissions

A school must not:

- discriminate in the arrangements that it makes for deciding who is offered a place;
- place any terms on a person's admission which are discriminatory;
- refuse a place for discriminatory reasons;
- harass a person who has applied for a place at your school;
- victimise a person in relation to admission to school.

Exceptions:

- admission to single sex schools;
- faith schools – this does not allow discrimination on any of the other prohibited grounds such as sex, race or sexual orientation;
- selective schools which are using permitted forms of selection on the basis of academic ability or aptitude are not discriminating by applying these forms of selection to disabled children who apply.

3. Providing education and access to any benefit, service or facility

A school must not:

- discriminate in the way it provides education for a pupil;
- discriminate in the way it gives a pupil access to any benefit, facility or service;
- refuse to provide education for a pupil for discriminatory reasons;
- refuse to give a pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- harass a pupil;

- victimise a pupil.

This means that everything a school does needs to be non-discriminatory and this may require regular reviews of practices, policies and procedures to ensure they do not discriminate against pupils with a protected characteristic.

Equalities Objectives 2016-19 Review due Sept 2019 Page 10

Equality and diversity is now a 'limiting judgement' in Ofsted inspections. This means that if equality measures are not being implemented effectively, this will restrict the overall inspection grade.

Exceptions:

- curriculum – these requirements do not apply to anything done in connection with the content of the curriculum, however the way in which the curriculum is taught is covered by the Act, so you must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination;
- acts of worship and other religious observance organised by the school are not covered by the provisions prohibiting religious discrimination;
- faith schools – this does not allow discrimination on any of the other prohibited grounds such as sex, race or sexual orientation.

4. Exclusions

Schools must not discriminate against pupils when making exclusion or suspension decisions. Reasons for exclusion must not be the protected characteristic. Any exclusions based on behaviour, should be consistently applied to those with or without a protected characteristic.

The procedures used for deciding what punishment a pupil will receive and for investigating incidents must not discriminate against pupils with a particular protected characteristic.

The single public sector equality duty

The single public sector equality duty will come into force in April 2011 (the existing duties on race, disability and gender remain in force until then). This will require public bodies to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - advance equality of opportunity;
 - foster good relations.

This duty means that schools have to take action to deliver better outcomes for pupils from different racial groups, for disabled people and on the basis of gender. This provides a framework for schools to tackle persistent and long standing areas of disadvantage, such as under-achievement of boys from certain ethnic groups, gender stereotyping in subject choice and bullying of disabled young people.

Equalities Objectives - Appendix B

Check list for school staff and governors.

The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training

This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides

The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders

The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties

The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need

The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives

A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes

The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference

All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the school council

The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern

Visual displays and multimedia resources reflect the diversity of the school community
Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies

The school takes part in annual events to raise awareness of issues around race, disability, sex and gender

The school environment is increasingly accessible possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment

Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered

The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information

The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled