



Staplehurst School

# Equality Policy (including Public Sector Equality Duty and Accessibility Plan)

**Date**

Policy ratified by **the Full Governing Body** at its meeting on

11 July 2018

Policy updated to include GDPR Provision

September 2018

Policy to be next reviewed by **the Learning and Development Committee**

Spring 2021

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# Equality Policy

## Introduction

### Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of Parliament and almost a hundred sets of regulations which had been introduced over several decades. It provides a single consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by getting rid of anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time and it extends protection against discrimination in certain areas.

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

### Guidance

Department for Education's [Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities - The Equality Act 2010](#) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England.

## Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** that applies to public bodies, including schools, and extends to certain **protected characteristics**. This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements.

In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination** and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- **Foster good relations across all characteristics** - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

## Definitions

**Protected Characters** means:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity
- marriage or civil partnership

**Disability** - the Equality Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

## Guiding Principles and Purpose

Staplehurst School is an inclusive community school. Staplehurst School is committed to equality both as an employer and a service-provider and we carry out our day to day work through our ethos of: learning, achieving and having fun together. The guiding principles of the policy are to:

- Ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect.
- Ensure that our school is a safe, secure and stimulating place for everyone.

- Recognise that people have different needs; we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all exactly the same.
- Recognise that for some pupils, extra support is needed to help them to achieve and be successful.
- Ensure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions, for example through talking to pupils and parents/carers, and through our School Council and Parent Council.
- Ensure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; their gender identity or reassignment; their marital or civil partnership status; being pregnant or having recently had a baby; their religion or beliefs; their sexual identity and orientation.

## Information Gathering

The collection of information is crucial to supporting the school in making decisions about what actions would best improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils. The information will help us to review our performance. Information will be detailed enough to enable us to measure the delivery on equality duties, to assess the impact of the changes made and to help the school identify which of our priorities have been achieved. From the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for the different group of children. .

## Types of Information

- Identification of children representing the different protected characteristics. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- Pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- Children's views are actively sought through the school council & pupil voice questionnaires;
- Information about how different groups access the whole curriculum; sports and activities choices of all groups;
- Uptake of the extended school offer by group;
- Records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- Outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents, in particular those who have been identified as difficult to engage.

## Objective Setting

The priorities for the school will be set in the light of:

- An examination of the information that the school has gathered
- The messages that the school has heard from pupils, parents and staff

## PSED Publication

There are two specific PSED publication duties schools are required to carry out. These are:

- To publish **information** to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty - **see Part 1**.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable **equality objectives** - **see Part 2**.
- We set our **Accessibility Plan** objectives for a 3 year period and review the progress annually - **see Part 3**.

## Responsibilities

### The Governing Body (GB)

The GB has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the GB discharges this responsibility through the SLT and monitors outcomes via its Learning & Development (L&D) Committee.

### Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- Familiarising themselves with the **Guidance**

- Raising awareness of elements of the duties with all staff, parents and pupils
- Providing appropriate training for all relevant people on the implementation of the policy
- Ensuring understanding of the broad definition of disability within the Act (see definitions section)
- Sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by pupils
- Monitoring the outcomes, undertaking **Impact Assessments** and responding with appropriate actions.

### **All Members of the School Community**

Staplehurst School regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of the community (staff, contractors, volunteers, parents and pupils) contribute to ensuring that the school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- Raising issues with the Inclusion Manager or SLT which have an impact or potential impact on the schools provisions, criteria and practices
- Maintaining an awareness of, and professional interest in, the school's Equality Policy
- Behaving with respect and fairness to all members of the school community

### **Parents' responsibility**

The School follows the DfE's guidance on dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility.

The School staff must treat all parents equally, unless there is a Court order limiting an individual's exercise of parental responsibility. Everyone who is a parent has a right to participate in decisions about a child's education and receive information about the child (even though, for day-to-day purposes, the School's main contact is likely to be a parent with whom the child lives on school days).

The School will:

- ask parents or guardians for contact details, including names and addresses, of all parents when they register a pupil;
- ensure that names and addresses of all parents, where known, are included in the admission register and also in pupil records and are available to the pupil's teachers;
- ensure that the school has details of who to contact in the case of an accident or medical emergency;
- ensure that details of Court orders are noted in a pupil's record
- ensure that contact details, including names and addresses, of all parents are forwarded to any school to which the pupil moves
- run Parent Governor elections in accordance with the School Governance Constitution Regulations

### **Data Protection**

The School recognises its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and associated legislation and the rights of data subjects with regards to the personal data held on them. Please refer to the School's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice for further details.

### **Reviewing and revising the policy**

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years or earlier in the light of any new information and/or guidance which becomes available. As part of the review of the policy, the school will revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the policy and ensure all legislative requirements are considered.

## Part 1: Information

Number of pupils on roll at the school: 418 (as at June 2018)

There are pupils at our school with different types of disabilities and these include:

- Physical Disability
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism
- Global Learning delay
- Speech and Language disorders
- Sensory Disorders
- Medical conditions e.g. Epilepsy, Diabetes, Asthma & Eczema

### Performance data for the Year 2016-17<sup>1</sup>

Year	Gender	Whole school on roll	Percentage meeting the expected standard or above							
			Year 1	Year 2 (KS1) SATS			Year 6 (KS2) SATS			
			Phonics	Reading	Writing	Maths	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2016/17	Boys	51%	71 (78) <sup>2</sup>	66 (71)	69 (61)	76 (74)	64 (68)	64 (70)	54 (75)	50 (57)
	Girls	49%	96 (85)	96 (80)	96 (75)	96 (76)	64 (75)	68 (82)	46 (75)	43 (65)
Year	Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Whole school on roll	Percentage meeting the expected standard							
			Year 1	Year 2 (KS1) SATS			Year 6 (KS2) SATS			
			Phonics	Reading	Writing	Maths	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2016/17	SEN	19%	0 (81)	50 (76)	50 (68)	75 (75)	13 (72)	0 (76)	13 (75)	0 (61)
	Non-SEN	81%	87 (87)	84 (83)	86 (76)	88 (83)	74 (80)	79 (86)	57 (83)	55 (70)

Pupil Survey Years 1-6 (February 2018)	No. of pupils surveyed	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
I am treated fairly <sup>3</sup>	321	62%	21%	8%	5%

<sup>1</sup> Data taken from Accessing School Performance (ASP)

<sup>2</sup> National benchmarks shown in brackets

<sup>3</sup> 5% of pupils either did not answer this question or gave an unclear answer  
Staplehurst School: Equality Policy 2018

## Part 2: Equality objectives

### Objectives

The School's Equality Objectives are to:

- **ensure that disadvantaged pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and maths;**
- **ensure that SEN pupils make good progress in reading, writing and maths.**

The strategies and interventions to tackle these concerns are detailed in the **School Plan**. The Leadership team monitors their impact as part of our regular monitoring cycle in school.

### How we have due regard for equality

The information provided here aims to show that we give careful consideration to equality issues in everything we do.

1. We are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 that it is unlawful to discriminate, treat some people less fairly or put them at a disadvantage.
2. Where applicable our policies make explicit that we aim to give careful consideration to equality issues and as policies are reviewed in line with the monitoring cycle they will be edited to reflect this requirement
3. We try to keep an accurate record, when possible and appropriate, of the protected characteristics of our pupils and employees at whole school and year group levels
4. We analyse our data to ensure we act upon any concerns in relation to the protected groups and this is reported termly to Governors.
5. We give due regard for equality issues in decisions and changes we make.
6. We record any inappropriate behavioural (including those regarding protected characteristics) or safeguarding incidents and act upon any concerns and report as appropriate to the LA and the Governing body on a termly basis.
7. We deal promptly and effectively with all incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to disability or special educational need, ethnicity and race, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion and belief and sexual orientation. We keep a record of all such incidents and notify those affected of what action we have taken and importantly monitor the impact our provision has had.
8. We provide training to all staff in relation to dealing with bullying and harassment incidents.
9. We have a special educational needs policy that outlines the provision the school makes for pupils with special educational needs.

The School recognises its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and associated legislation and the rights of data subjects with regards to the personal data held on them. Please refer to the School's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice for further details.

## Part 3: Accessibility Plan

Staplehurst School is a single storey building which has been extended many times over the years.

We have no identified barriers to **Accessing the Curriculum**.

We have identified two barriers to **Accessing the Premises** which are detailed below. At present we have no wheelchair-dependent pupils or members of staff. From September 2018, there will be a pupil in Early Years who needs to use a walker or wheelchair at all times.

### Barriers to Access - Premises

Question	Yes	No	Action/Comment	Person responsible	Time Scale for completion
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities, classrooms, the assembly hall, dining area, library, indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all pupils or members of staff?		✓	Access to playgrounds from classrooms 2-3 and 11-14 are via steps which would pose a difficulty to someone with mobility issues (pupil & after schools clubs).	F&P Committee	Ramps are being installed from all the EY rooms and the toilet opposite the inclusion rooms is being converted into a disabled child/adult toilet over the summer holidays. The Y1 playground is to have the tree roots levelled later in the year.
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?		✓	The school has a number of light fittings which are dated and do not comply with current lighting regulations. 'Quick fix' lighting has been installed at the main gain and the school is still pursuing upgrading all lighting both internally and externally.	F&P Committee	March 2019