



## Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy

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## Introduction

This policy sets out our school's approach to promoting equality, diversity and community cohesion. It covers race, disability and gender in response to the statutory duties on schools in regard to disability, race and gender equality.

## The School Context

Silsoe VC Lower School is a small voluntary controlled Church of England first school in a rural setting with a low deprivation factor. Over 80% of pupils are from a white British background with a minority of pupils from the following ethnic groups

- Black Caribbean
- Chinese
- White and Asian
- White and Black Caribbean
- White Irish
- White other.

Less than 3% of pupils have English as an additional language but the school strives to enrich the linguistic experiences of all of its pupils by recognising and celebrating the linguistic diversity of British society.

There is relatively low pupil mobility although a minority of pupils transfer in and out of the school in every year group. Most pupils arrive in the school's social, emotional and mental health support unit after Year 1.

The school achieves high attainment from all groups of learners. It tracks the progress of boys and girls, pupils with disabilities, pupils with additional needs, Highly Skilled pupils, pupils from different racial backgrounds and disadvantaged pupils rigorously to ensure no groups of pupils are deprived and all pupils achieve at their potential.

The school benefits from an inclusion provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. This provision is run using nurture group principles. About 15% of pupils on the school roll have been identified as having additional needs. The school has a strong record on inclusion and strives to value all members of the school community equally.

## Equality – Aims and Values

The school aims to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest standards. All of the work of the school is rooted in a Values based education approach, which means shared values underpin all of its work. Based on mutual **respect** for all, **care** for everyone and for the environment and the acceptance of personal **responsibility** these values are fundamental to every aspect of school life and determine how the school operates within the wider community. The school is proud to be a voluntary controlled Church of England school but it recognises and values diversity and the richness of different beliefs and cultures within a multicultural society.

The ethos statement as agreed by the Governing Board is as follows: - *Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in partnership with the Church of England at parish and diocesan level.*

Our vision is to be an excellent, God-centred, values-based, community-focused school where everyone is welcomed, encouraged and included. Our children will develop as creative, determined learners and responsible citizens inspired to achieve their God-given potential and live life in all its fullness. We will foster understanding, tolerance and forgiveness within our caring Christian community.

### The School's Approach to Promoting Equality

The school has drawn up an equality policy which provides a framework to ensure that it eliminates unlawful discrimination and harassment, promotes equality of opportunity and promotes good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all of its activities.

The equality policy strives to ensure that no pupil, staff member, parent, guardian, governor or visitor to the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds, which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, ethnic origin, language, religion or belief, gender and gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, social class, responsibility for children or other dependants, trade union or political activities, where the person lives or spent convictions.

### Race, Disability and Gender Equality

In response to the school's specific duties relating to

- Race Equality
- Disability Equality
- Gender Equality

the school has expanded its equality policy through developing a log of person peer abuse. This includes a log of racist incidents, developing a log of homophobic incidents, tracking the progress of different types of learners and by producing a three year accessibility plan and disability discrimination scheme. These documents strive to monitor and improve the school's ability to include all people, prevent and tackle discrimination and continually improve our provision to meet diverse needs.

### A Cohesive Community

The school also recognises its potential and responsibility for promoting community cohesion and developing each pupil's understanding of British Values.

Therefore, in order to promote a cohesive community, the school will aim to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between different elements of the local community through work with community groups such as the Church, the Parish Council, the Residential Care Home (Taymer), The WI, English Heritage, The Green Sand Trust and the Christian Aid Committee.
- Encourage children and families to feel part of their wider community through participation in community events, supporting local, national and international charity appeals, and through special events at the school focused on the environment and the local community.
- Ensure teaching and the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity and discrimination.
- Increase the life opportunities for all.
- Establish close partnerships with schools in different places within the UK and wider world.
- Recognise the possibility of prejudice and radicalisation demonstrating the dangers of both.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone who works in the school has a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and for avoiding unfair discrimination.

#### **School governors are responsible for:**

- Making sure the school complies with all current legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed.

#### **The Head Teacher is responsible for:**

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that governors, staff, pupils and their parents/guardians know about it.
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working and providing training for them on the policy if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

#### **All school staff are responsible for:**

- Modelling good practice, dealing with racist incidents and being able to tackle bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.
- Be alert to signs that pupils may be subject to radicalisation and use PREVENT training to tackle this issue.

#### **Pupils are responsible for:**

- Keeping equality, diversity and sustainability issues on the School Council agenda. This may include:
  - Organisation of fundraising and community events

- Reviewing the anti-bullying policy and involvement in events such as anti-bullying campaigns
- Special environment days and work towards the Eco Standard
- Developing school/class rules which reflect the school's values and which challenge discriminatory behaviour.

**Parents/Guardians are responsible for:**

- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the PTA agenda through a shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area.

**Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors.**

Responsibilities include:

- Co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment including racist and homophobic incidents
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils such as CLA, children from minority ethnic, language or traveller communities, disabled pupils and those on the SEND register
- Monitoring exclusions.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

The school policy on equality, diversity and community cohesion will be supported by the policies listed below. These will be linked to the School Development Plan and will thus include targets determined by the Governing Board to promote equality, inclusion and a cohesive community in the school.

Pupils' outcomes will be monitored annually by teachers, the Head Teacher, our SIP and the Curriculum and Pupils Committee of the Governing Board to ensure that all groups of pupils are achieving at their potential. Our equality policies will be monitored regularly by the whole teaching staff and within the Curriculum and Pupils Governing Board Committee, and the Strategic Resources Committee. The Resources Committee will monitor progress against our accessibility plan annually. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of this assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision making.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equality Plan
- Accessibility Plan
- Racial Equality Policy
- EAL Policy
- CLA Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEN Policy
- SEMH Provision Policy
- SMSC Policy
- RE Policy
- Anti bullying Policy
- International Schools Policy