



Values Education' is about understanding what is important to us individually, within our families and as a whole school community.

Equalities & Diversity Policy

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Issue Date: November 2022

Review Date: November 2026

Where possible we offer translation or explanation of written communication. Please contact the school office if you require forms/paperwork in any other format.

Statement Of Intent

Silsoe VC Lower School understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our school's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims.

Aims and Values

- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of race, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background.
- To recognise and celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion.
- To ensure that this policy is applied to all we do
- To ensure that pupils and parents are fully involved in the provision made by the school.
- To ensure that within the school budget, adequate funding is provided to underpin this policy and that intervention, positive and preventative action is funded where necessary.
- Every individual within the school achieves their full potential and has the same chance and is recognised as a unique gift from God
- Children learn to be caring and responsible citizens showing an awareness of children's rights
- Understanding and mutual respect for all members of society, regardless of differences, are actively promoted
- Equal access is achieved by everyone and for everyone

- Prejudices are broken down and positive attitudes are fostered
- Discrimination is understood and actively prevented by all

How Will We Achieve Our Aims For Our School?

This will be achieved by:

- Addressing inequality and discrimination that may occur within the workforce and the school
- Celebrating and embracing the diversity that exists in the school and its wider community
- Ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum reflects and takes into account equality and diversity issues
- Creating opportunities for the wider involvement of staff, children, parents and carers and the wider community through consultation, participation and partnership working
- Ensuring that our vision is shared with the children, staff, parents, Governors and our broader community
- We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the World communities.
- We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging, analysing and responding to racist and bullying incidents. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics.

The governing body is legally responsible for ensuring that the Equality Act is observed by all staff in school. However everybody involved in the school community has a responsibility to ensure that the spirit of the policy and its legal requirements are observed.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) '[The Equality Act and schools](#)'
- DfE (2018) '[Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children](#)'

- DfE (2018) '[Gender separation in mixed schools](#)'
- DfE (2018) '[Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)'
- DfE (2018) '[Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools](#)'
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
- PHSE Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- Admissions Policy
- LAC Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

Roles And Responsibilities

The governing board will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
 - Admissions.
 - The way the school provides and education for pupils.
 - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
 - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will:

- Implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.

- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

Staff will:

- Be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and to deal with incidents of harassment and/or discrimination as the highest priority.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, and pertaining to their specific roles.
- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.
- Act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community.

Protected Characteristics

Staff will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated.

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

Sex

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a pupil's biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. The school understands that some pupils identify as a gender different to the sex they were assigned at birth, and we will support pupils through their transitioning phases.

Staff will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils of other sexes.

The school will only separate pupils by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so, or if one of the following applies:

- Pupils will suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex
- One sex has needs that are different from the needs of the other sex
- Participation in an activity by pupils of one sex is disproportionately low

The school will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.

Pupils will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity in the school, e.g. in relation to technology lessons, all pupils will be allowed to choose which skills they learn.

There may be occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, but the school will ensure that such classes do not give pupils a disadvantage when compared to pupils of the other sex in other classes. Occasions where pupils are separated to be taught in single-sex classes will be documented and the separation justified to ensure parents, Ofsted and, where necessary, the wider community can understand the reasons behind separation. Where a subject is taught in a single-sex class, trans pupils will be allowed to attend the single-sex class that corresponds with the gender they identify with.

Pupils' age and stage of development will be taken into consideration before segregating sports teams. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities; where separation is deemed necessary, the single-sex sports teams will receive the same quality and amount of resources.

Race And Ethnicity

Staff will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils and the school will regularly review its practices to ensure that they are fair.

Staff will ensure pupils with EAL are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times.

The school will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' will not be tolerated, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

The school may, however, take positive action, e.g. organising open days for pupils and families of a specific race that is under-represented, to address the particular challenges affecting pupils of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

Disability

Staff will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.

The school will avoid implementing rules that could have an adverse effect on pupils with disabilities (e.g. by making physical fitness a basis for admission, or asking all pupils to deliver a presentation, as this could be unfair towards pupils with anxiety), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Staff will ensure that they do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

The school will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The school will meet its duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented and reviewed where necessary.

The school will adhere to its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

Religion And Belief

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief.

The school will ensure that pupils are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the school's Attendance and Absence Policy.

The school will liaise with local religious leaders of all faiths to inform the amount of leave pupils will be granted in relation to religious observance.

Sexual Orientation

Staff will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

The school will ensure that pupils are taught about the nature of marriage, including same-sex marriage, by presenting the facts of English and Welsh law – teachers will not offer personal opinions when discussing marriage in RSHE. The school will educate pupils on positive relationships, families and gender identities within the LGBTQ+ community. RSHE lessons will be taught in accordance with the school's policy.

Staff will ensure that any religious beliefs with regards to sexual orientation are taught to pupils in an educational context, in a manner that is not prejudicial or discriminatory.

Staff will support LGBTQ+ pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The school will ensure that there is a designated safe space where pupils can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

Gender Reassignment

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. The school recognises that gender reassignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional.

Pupils will have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity within the constraints of our dress code, outlined in our School Uniform Policy.

The school will ensure that there are suitable toilet and changing facilities for pupils to use, including:

- Gender-specific toilets and changing facilities.
- Private changing facilities.

The facilities will be made available to all pupils and pupils can use the facility they feel most comfortable in, e.g. if a trans pupil wished to use a private changing room.

The school will support trans pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The school will ensure that there is a designated safe space within the school where trans pupils can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

Looked-After Children (LAC)

LAC and previously LAC (PLAC) will be given the highest priority for admissions, as per the requirements of our Admissions Policy.

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all LAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

Staff will ensure that any SEND that LAC or PLAC have are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The school will adhere to its LAC Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for LAC.

The Curriculum

Pupils will be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, and the school will not make any unjustified changes to curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have. The school will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.

To ensure equality, diversity and acceptance are taught and promoted throughout each subject area, the school will:

- Ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel safe and that all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalised, the teacher takes positive steps to include them.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the abilities and needs of all their students.
- Be responsive to different learning styles and take account of experiences and starting points, in order to engage all learners
- Use a range of teaching styles including collaborative learning so that students appreciate the value of working together. Questioning, discussion and collaborative problem-solving tasks are encouraged.
- Encourage students to become independent and take responsibility for their own learning and actions.

- Challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.
- Ensure resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of students, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas.

The observation of inclusive teaching strategies will remain a key aspect of the SLT's **annual** programme of monitoring.

Community Cohesion

The school encourages all students and families to feel part of the wider community and works with schools, students and families throughout the Harlington Area Schools Trust to develop a wide range of opportunities for all.

Parents are kept fully informed of the opportunities available in the school and wider community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all, and parental involvement is monitored to encourage participation of all groups. Reports to parents/carers are accessible and appropriate and encourage a response from parents/carers about the student's learning. The school uses surveys and governor feedback to assess appropriate provision and equality of opportunity.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The school will meet its duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding pupils who have any of the protected characteristics outlined in [the Protected characteristics section of this policy](#).
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how the school may further equality.

There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and pupils will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

Bullying And Discrimination

Our Anti-bullying Policy will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

Any bullying incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to notify social services and/or the police of any incident.

Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy and the equality plan/objectives will be reviewed by the Headteacher and governing board **annually** and updated where appropriate – any amendments will be duly communicated to staff.