

# The Edge Schools' Federation



Single Equality Scheme

The Single Equality Scheme brings together the school's approach for promoting equality in our policies and procedures and, most importantly in our day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community.

Our scheme includes pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and all those within our extended School community.

We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being fully inclusive and accessible and in providing a quality learning experience for our children.

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## **1. Introduction**

The “Public Sector Equality Duty” means that schools must adopt a proactive approach to equality. In practice, this requires all schools to:

- Take positive and proactive steps to identify areas of potential inequality before they have the chance to make an impact;
- Make changes to ensure that any areas of potential inequality are eliminated.

Equality Duties are not new to schools. The Duty to Promote Race Equality came into force in 2002, the Duty to Promote Disability Equality in 2006 and The Gender Equality Duty in 2007. As of 1st April 2011, the Equality Act 2010 has required schools to meet a single Public Sector Equality Duty which encompasses ‘General’ and ‘Specific’ duties in promoting equality across the full range of protected characteristics, namely:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Pregnancy & Maternity

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) and action plan covers a period from 2014 to 2017. It integrates our statutory duties in relation to race, disability and gender (three equality strands) and in relation to promoting community cohesion.

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age (three further strands) and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment in those areas.

Our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan enables us to achieve a framework for action which covers all six equality strands and ensures that we meet our responsibilities for the public sector duties in an inclusive way.

We will continue to meet our statutory duties by reporting annually on the progress of the Single Equality Scheme and action plan. This will be reviewed by our Board of Governors and will cover activity undertaken in relation to the six equality strands and promoting community cohesion.

## **2. Policy Statement**

- The School acknowledges, and welcomes, diversity among pupils, staff and visitors.
- We do not discriminate against anyone, be they child or adult, on the grounds of their sex, race, age, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic, national origins, sexual orientation or physical or mental abilities.
- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our School.
- We ensure that all children have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the School.

- The School is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, pupils, parents and carers and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We will make reasonable adjustments, where required, in order to improve access to the School buildings, increase access to the curriculum and to improve delivery of information.

### **3. Meeting Our Duties**

Under the statutory duties, all schools have a 'General Duty' to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

This means:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- Encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, as shown in the school's Inclusion Policy.

### **Race Equality**

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

1. Eliminating racial discrimination
2. Promoting equality of opportunity
3. Promoting good relations between people of different racial groups.

All racist incidents will be recorded on the school's concern form and a copy given to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will record this on the school's record and will follow the Local Authority Procedures for reporting racial incidents.

### **Disability Equality**

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

1. Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. Eliminating unlawful discrimination
3. Eliminating disability-related harassment
4. Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. Encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
6. Taking steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

## **Accessibility**

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled pupils and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

1. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access;
2. Increase access to the curriculum
3. Make written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways.

We must ensure that disabled pupils do not receive less favourable treatment and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

## **Gender Equality**

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

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women, boys and girls.

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap. Shropshire County Council (the employing body of Brockton CE and Church Preen Primary Schools) considers that this has been addressed through unified conditions and pay for school teachers.

## **Transgender**

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

## **Community Cohesion**

We also have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. We have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting our objectives.

We recognise that our school has a responsibility for educating children who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of culture, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds. We understand that there are different types of schools in different communities and will promote the interaction of children with those in other schools.

We understand that we already have a duty to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups.

## **Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Belief, Pregnancy & Maternity**

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

## **4. Our School Vision & Values**

Meeting the duties described above will mean that all our actions will embody our School's key principles and values, which include that:

- We believe that all should have equal access to opportunities, regardless of ability, age, gender, disabilities, racial or ethnic group.

- We celebrate the diversity of our world.
- We respect the religious, spiritual, cultural, and moral values of others and will consider thoughtfully their attitudes, values and beliefs.
- We provide an atmosphere of harmony and respect and safety within an educational environment.
- We strive to make the best possible provision for all our children, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- We respect diversity. We know that treating people equally is not simply a matter of treating everyone the same. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experience of boys and girls.
- We know that equality is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable.
- We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views, and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture or religious belief.

## **5. Context**

Brockton and Church Preen Primary Schools are both smaller-than-average primary schools. The schools is located a rural areas and serve their respective local communities. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average. The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Reception class.

## **6. Collecting & Analysing Equality Information for Pupils**

The Edge Schools' Federation school are fully inclusive. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self- esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We collect and analyse the following equality information for our pupils and store the information on the school databases, including our Management Information System:

- Attainment levels
- Attendance levels
- Exclusions
- Complaints of bullying and harassment
- Complaints of racialism
- Rewards for academic progress
- Rewards for behavioural progress
- Attendance at extra-curricular activities
- Participation in School Council

Actions required/highlighted from the above will be prioritised over the three year life span of our scheme and will be included in the Action Plan.

## **7. Collecting & Analysing Equality Information for Employment & Governance**

The Edge Schools' Federation is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment. It aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of our school and local population.

We collect and analyse the following information for our staff and governors:

- Applicants for employment
- Staff profile
- Attendance on staff training events
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Staff Appraisal/Performance management

We are mindful of the laws relating to confidentiality when devising this scheme and Action Plan. Although there is a statutory duty to share information about the school's Single Equality Scheme (SES), we recognise that care must be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that any information published cannot be used to identify individuals.

In respect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, any analysis of sensitive information is undertaken by a senior member of the school staff and a synopsis passed to a working party as required.

## **8. Consultation**

We involved pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers, and our wider School community in creating the Single Equality Scheme and action plan, either directly with the School community or through previous policy documents that have contributed to this development. This helped to ensure that the views of potentially disadvantaged groups were fully incorporated in the development of this Scheme and action plan.

Examples include:

- Discussions at School Council
- Individual pupil questionnaires
- Contact with parent/carers (meetings, questionnaires, coffee mornings)
- All staff through dedicated staff meeting time
- Discussions at governing bodies
- Discussions within cluster groups
- Contact with local community groups, including diverse groups (play group, Local Parish)
- Involvement within local community activities
- Local authority by taking the views of the school's School Improvement Advisor

## **9. Equality Impact Assessments**

Equality impact assessment is a systematic method of rigorously checking all School policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are genuinely accessible and meet the needs of our staff and the local community in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

We will undertake assessments to identify the impact or effect (either negative or positive) of our policies, procedures and functions on various sections of the population paying particular regard to

the needs of minority groups. Where negative impacts are identified we then take steps to deal with this and to ensure equality of service to all.

An inventory of existing policies has been undertaken and we are currently undertaking an on-going rolling programme of impact assessment for all our policies and procedures.

### **10. Other School Policies**

We have used our existing School policies to inform our Single Equality Scheme. These include:

- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- School Development Plan
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Teaching & Learning Policy

### **11. Roles & Responsibilities**

The School Equality Scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the School's self-evaluation and other review processes as well as being updated at least annually. Following this regular impact assessment, the whole equality scheme will be reviewed at least every three years.

- The Governors will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this Scheme and Action Plan.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and that they are given necessary training and support. The Head Teacher has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the Scheme and will report progress to the Governors.
- Staff are expected to promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- Our pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure that all visitors to the School, including parents/carers are adhering to our commitment to equality.

### **12. Commissioning & Procurement**

The School, as required by law, will ensure that when we buy services from another organisation to help us provide our services, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process.

### **13. Publicising Our Scheme**

The Single Equality Scheme will be available to all persons on request and be explained to all stakeholders through:

- School website
- Staff induction
- Distribution to local community and voluntary groups as appropriate

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our School community in the on-going evolution of our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This includes:

- A slot at School Council meetings to discuss equality and diversity issues where appropriate
- A regular slot at staff meetings
- Having staff able to discuss equality and diversity matters during parent consultation meetings.
- Having school open mornings/evenings for the wider community to celebrate the work of pupils and give the opportunity for feedback

#### **14. Annual Review of Progress**

We will continue to review annually the actions we have taken in the development of our Single Equality Scheme which include:

- The results of our information gathering activities for race, disability and gender and what we have done with this information
  - A summary from equality impact assessments undertaken
  - An update of the progress made against priorities
  - Celebrating what we have achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion
- Producing an Annual Report with regard to all aspects of race, disability and gender within the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan

1. The Governors will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this Scheme.
2. The Governors will review this scheme annually and revise it every three years or as appropriate in line with legislation.
3. The Governors agreed this scheme on the date shown below to take effect immediately.

The Edge Schools' Federation

## Single Equality Scheme Action Plan 2018 - 22

R - Race	A - Age
D - Disability	R/B - Religion or Belief
G - Gender	CC - Community Cohesion
SO - Sexual Orientation	

Action Planned to meet Statutory Duty/ Equality Legislation						Planned Outcome	Planned Actions	Timescale	Actioned by	Monitored by
R	D	G	SO	A	R/B					
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular agenda item at staff and team meetings</li> </ul>	Termly	All staff	HT
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor job applicants for all posts</li> <li>Collate equality information from applications</li> </ul>	Dec 18	HT Gov's	Finance Citee
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to review all current policies</li> <li>Undertake a comprehensive procedure review to audit equality issues &amp; impact</li> </ul>	Jan 2019	HT Gov's	Full Gov's
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications available to all stakeholders in a range of formats, responding to need</li> <li>Identify appropriate support &amp; resources, e.g. large print, Braille, community language</li> </ul>	July 19	HT Office	HT
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPD / INSET delivered to staff, governors &amp; parents as required</li> </ul>	July 19	HT	Finance Citee
x							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review curriculum content across the school</li> <li>Assemblies, lessons &amp; resources provide opportunities for children to learn about racial &amp; cultural diversity other than their own</li> </ul>	July 19	Class Teachers	Curric Citee
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular analysis of internal progress data</li> <li>Analyse end of year attainment data to identify trends</li> <li>Secure action planning to address &amp; narrow any gap</li> </ul>	Termly	HT Ckass Teachers	Curric Citee

## Accessibility Plan 2018 - 22

This can relate very closely to the disability elements of the equality objectives above, except that it covers pupils only whereas the equality plan includes all members of the school community.

	<b>Actions (focused on outcomes rather than processes)</b>
i. Improvements in access to the curriculum	To ensure regular assessment of pupils at SEN support by external professionals Type to enter text Engagement and interest of pupils developed through implementation of the new curriculum 2014
ii. Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services	To implement recommendations for external professionals relating to physical adjustments  To ensure that plans are made as early as possible in relation to the identification of pupil needs.
iii. Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils	Continue to build on the good links established with the SIS where appropriate.  Progress reports to parents/carers are clearly written and free from jargon. Where necessary information is available in languages and formats other than English. Parents with a disability or with learning difficulties will be able to access school's information.