



Sherwood Park School

Single Equality Policy and Plan 2023-27

Policy Name	Single Equality Policy and Plan 2023 - 2027
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DFE Guidance (statutory or recommended)	Statutory
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Version Number	Review Date	Amendment Details

Single equality policy and plan

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Introduction

Sherwood Park School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination (direct or indirect), and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our pupils the importance of inclusion, acceptance, respect and compassion towards themselves and others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

This single equality plan (Plan) sets out how the school will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act to eliminate all discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). The school aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Sherwood Park's governing body with the help of the headteacher in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the **special educational needs (SEN) policy, admissions policy, anti-bullying policy** and the **wellbeing (behaviour policy) and the accessibility plan**. All the school's policies are available for all staff on the google shared drive and in the "policies" folder or alternatively use this link <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0APOMxK0aQFG-Uk9PVA> . This policy is also available on the school's website.

Through the creation of this Plan, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. The current summary of equality-based actions being undertaken by the school is set out in annex A. This Plan will be reviewed at least every four years, or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

School profile

Sherwood Park School recognises that certain groups in society have been disadvantaged because of unlawful discrimination they have faced due to their race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/ belief, sexual orientation or age.

This policy will put into place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination, victimisation and stigma within the school community and the workforce. It will also support us as a school community to challenge unlawful discrimination we encounter in our work and will actively look to find ways to celebrate the rich diversity we have in our school community. We are ambitious for all our pupils and will work proactively to ensure the very best outcomes available to them, “breaking the mould” to enable and support them to achieve their educational potential.

We see all our pupils, their families and each other (staff) as of equal value regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies and practices will not discriminate but will take into account the differences in life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

Our policies will actively look to celebrate and support individual differences. All our pupils have an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP) and a disability. There is a community that has been historically discriminated against including; low expectations for educational outcomes and destinations, medical de-prioritisation, lack of access to appropriate education, services and opportunities, external stigma (being seen of less value due to their disability) and seen as lacking capacity. Our school seeks to be a haven of positivity and celebration of their differences through all its policies and practices, exemplified in our “LEARN” ethos, our wellbeing (and behaviour) support offer which is based on “Self-reg” (see website for more info on these strategies and approaches). We want all our pupils (and all our staff) to achieve the absolute best they can educationally and in terms of their outcomes and destinations but fundamentally, we want all our pupils, families and staff to feel they belong and are valued in our school community and for pupils to leave us with a strong sense of positive self-worth, self-agency and personal ambition.

We will always actively seek to encourage our learners to be themselves, teaching them to speak out through focussing on developing their ability and confidence to communicate through whatever means they use and never look to modify their behaviour (including stigmatising), special interests or who they are in order to “fit in” – in our school community everyone has a place and everyone “belongs”, regardless of their differences. We actively shape our culture to this end, recognising the “pro-social” importance of communicating through everything we say and do, that our pupils are of equal value and all have immense worth. We see our children for the fantastic children they are and look to take every opportunity to share this with our wider community, thereby challenging discrimination and stigma.

The school very much recognises that a key component to ensuring equality and diversity is through representation and advocacy of different groups particularly in relation to protected characteristics and will look to promote this through equality of opportunity for all staff and in our recruitment procedures and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

All Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The Heads of School have the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this Plan.

The governing body

The governing body will:

- create and approve this Plan with the help of the headteacher and ensure that is adopted correctly throughout the school
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives as set out in this Plan
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan on a regular basis and make any amendments to improve on the Plan when and where necessary
- nominate a named governor to oversee the implementation of the Plan, monitor equality outcomes, and regularly report back to the rest of the governing body
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this Plan which could directly affect their child
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community on the progress of the Plan through the school's annual report.

The headteacher and senior leadership team

The headteacher, with the support of the rest of the senior leadership team, will:

- promote the Plan both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- report back to the governing body on how the Plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs.
- ensure the school employs a transdisciplinary approach which ensures each individual pupil has the best possible chance of accessing their education, speaking out and keeping safe.

Staff

School staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this Plan and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed, and action taken where necessary.
- ensure they participate in the transdisciplinary way of working which ensures each individual pupil has the best possible chance of accessing their education, speaking out and keeping safe.

Pupils

Pupils at the school, in the context of their differing needs and with the appropriate levels of support and guidance, *will work* in accordance with our pupil wellbeing policy and ethos so as to;

- engage with the school's aims in eliminating any discrimination;
- promote a positive learning environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site;
- communicate / report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred;
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**.

Parents, carers, and visitors

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with this Plan and support the Plan by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home or in support of this plan and our pupils at their place of work;
- attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to this Plan;
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in;
- respect and follow this Plan when visiting the school.

Promoting equality and social awareness in school and within the local community

Community cohesion

The school expects all its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of.

Inclusion

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds. You can find more information regarding our provision for and policy on inclusion for SEN in the school's **SEN policy**.

Pupil voice

Through our support of student voice, we encourage our pupils to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. Teaching our children they have value and their voice counts is fundamental to our curriculum delivery and ethos. Equally important is developing their ability to become active participants and citizens through developing their ability to communicate as effectively as possible.

Our school employs a transdisciplinary approach which ensures each individual pupil has the best possible chance of accessing their education, speaking out and keeping safe.

Recruitment

Sherwood Park School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, transgender, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Sherwood Park School acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in this Plan is the foundation for all its activities.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

Staff

Equal opportunities for staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made because of merit and ability and in compliance with the law
- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce including the duty to make reasonable adjustments
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice
- 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.

Staff discipline and suspension

Sherwood Park School is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and anyone not adhering to these values is held to account through our **staff discipline, conduct, and grievance policy**.

The education and wellbeing of our pupils is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our pupils will be disciplined. The **school's staff appraisal policy** provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

The school **wellbeing (behaviour) policy** takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with SEN and disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and will act to address any concerns that arise in this area.

The school is proud of its admissions record and has been recognised by the local authority as unique in taking on many children who other schools have stated could not meet their needs due to their complex individual differences. This has meant that numerous vulnerable children have been able to be educated close to home and in some cases have been able to continue to live at home because we can meet their needs.

Monitoring and review

This Plan will be reviewed at least every four years by the governing body, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation). Governors will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Governors will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and pupils, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

Information

Information will be gathered through:

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor this Plan. 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 and young peoples' views, actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options
- sports and activities choices of all groups
- exclusions data analysed by group (if there are any)
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue
- data on the recruitment, development, and retention of employees
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage.

At regular intervals throughout the year the heads of school with *support from the senior leadership team* will provide **monitoring reports** for review by the governing body. These will include:

- progress against targets relating to equality and future plans
- school population
- recruitment and retention
- key initiatives.

Outcomes

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Where robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment will be carried out and an action plan put in place to aid these outcomes. Action plans will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- clear timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- resource implications
- specified dates for review.

Equality impact assessments

Impact assessments are carried out as part of the review of all school policies and assess whether school policies or plans are having a negative or adverse, or positive impact on groups and individuals within the school community.

END

ANNEX A: Equality Objectives and Plan to achieve them:

Protected Characteristic	Objective / Action to be taken	How it will be monitored	Who is responsible for implementation	Timeframes	Early Success Indicators
All	Publish and promote equality plan on website, newsletters etc	Include reference in annual survey of parents/staff	Headteacher	Ongoing with review after survey	Staff aware of aims of policy and implement them throughout school. Parents acknowledge plan and question impact in survey
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils	Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability	Head teacher / Governing body	Termly	Analysis of teacher assessments / termly data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups
All	Sensitively, consensually and respectfully, gain more information on protected characteristics to further inform our strategic implementation of this plan and attached policies.	Report to governors / this plan.	SBM	Annually	Report to governors. Increased data.
All	Review and develop our approaches to amplifying the learner's voice in and about the curriculum.	Headteacher's (HT) report to governors.	Assistant Heads / wider leadership team	Termly	HT report - case studies and reports of this occurring.
All	Review and augment our celebration of our individual differences within the whole school community for example through awareness days	Headteacher's (HT) report to governors.	Assistant Heads / wider leadership team	Termly	HT report - case studies and reports of this occurring.
All	Increase our wellbeing offer and capacity through recruiting additional wellbeing practitioners (increasing access and progress)	Headteacher's (HT) report to governors.	SL: Head of Therapy and Wellbeing	Termly	HT report - Successful recruitment

Protected Characteristic	Objective / Action to be taken	How it will be monitored	Who is responsible for implementation	Timeframes	Early Success Indicators
All	Empower families to be better informed and supported through the appointment of Family liaison worker (s)	Headteacher's (HT) report to governors.	Head's of School	Termly	HT report - Successful recruitment
All	Develop our co production strategy to increase representation and voice from pupils and families in decision making at all levels.	HT report	SL for therapy and wellbeing	Termly	HT report - case studies and reports of this occurring.