

Equality Policy

2018/19



Policy Adopted on: **09.06.2018**

Approved by: **Full Board of Trustees**

Date of Review: **08.06.2019**

Signed: _____

Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Seva School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our schools physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, governors, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our policies and practices have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we listen to and involve pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Overall Aims of Our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes¹.

Our Approach

¹ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We Actively Seek Out Opportunities to Embrace the Following Key Concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Our Vision Statement About Equality

Seva School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning. We are committed to creating inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our Duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.²

² See *Appendix A* for further information about legislation

They are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child³.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or school visits
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

The Role and Responsibilities Within our School Community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available

³ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the Equality Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP

Our pupils/students will:

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the policy
- be encouraged to actively support the policy

Our parents/carers will:

- have access to the policy through a range of different formats appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy
- be fully aware of the policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the policy
- identify any queries or training requirements

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the Equality Policy
- Be encouraged to support the policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy

Commissioned Services (buying in services)

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made⁴ or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment. We have disabled access- disabled parking bays and a disabled toilet. We offer a hearing loop. We are a vegetarian, egg free and nut free school.

⁴ Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties.

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

Responding to Hate or Prejudice-based Incidents and Bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

Implementation, Monitoring and Reviewing

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

Section 3

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: June 2018-2019

SEVA SCHOOL

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/ progress:
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To increase pupil, staff and governors awareness of legal and human rights and the responsibilities that underpin society	For pupils to understand they have rights, how they can exercise their rights and understand how rights link to responsibilities	All pupils and staff	To register schools and progress towards the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award ⁵	Prabhjap Jutla (Faith Ethos) Senior Leadership Team and Governors	Sep 2018-2019	
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To ensure all pupil groups reach their full potential	Ensure curriculum provision matches the needs of each group and that all groups make the best progress	Specific pupil groups: Gender Special Needs Free School Meals Ethnicity	Staff to be fully aware of the different pupil groups in their class. Monitor attainment and achievement of all pupil groups	Senior Leadership Team and Governors	Ongoing	
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Equality of opportunity	All	To ensure that policy and practice relating to the recruitment, retention and training is inclusive of the diverse needs of applicants and staff	Improved data collection and analysis on staffing issues	Applicants and all school staff including volunteers	Undertake equality impact assessment on policies and practices relating to recruitment and staffing and ensure alignment with local authority guidance	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	September 18	

⁵ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/>

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/ progress:
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race/ Religion or Belief/ Disability	To ensure the content of school meals and the eating environment meets the needs the Sikh ethos of our school and caters for those with specific health needs	Increased take up of school meals	All those with specific race, faith, cultural and health needs	Regular meetings with school cook	School cook	Ongoing	
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation Fostering good relations	All	To ensure pupils are accepted for who they are and that any discrimination is challenged. Appreciate and value the differences in others	Challenge stereotypes- gender, ethnic background, culture, religion. Build on pupil awareness so that pupils can detect bias and challenge discrimination	Pastoral team	Anti Bullying task team action plan	Dyal Thandi/ Claire McDougal Senior Leadership team and Governors	June 2018 – Ongoing action plans	
Advance equality of opportunity	Disability/ All	To increase social and emotional skills for pupils/students with SEMH (Social and Emotional Mental Health) concerns	Improved ability by pupils/students to handle difficult situations	Pupils with SENH	Train staff to deliver small group work sessions to support targeted pupils in developing social and emotional skills	SENCo Whole Staff	June 2018 –	
Advance equality of opportunity	Other	To improve the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals	Improved attendance	pupils eligible for free school meals	Collate and analyse data relating to attendance by target group Identify strategies to improve attendance of this group	Pastoral leaders SLT	April 2018 –	

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/ progress:
Fostering good relations	All	To promote good relations between people from different backgrounds	<p>Improved understanding of diversity within the school</p> <p>Increased positive attitudes towards disabled people</p>		<p>Make use of disability images in PSHE</p> <p>Invite in representatives from disability equality groups to meet with children</p>	SLT PSHE Coordinators	Sept 2018– Sept 2019	

Appendix A Key legislation

Equality Act 2010

Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

