

# Richard Avenue Primary School

## Single Equality Scheme

Date of review: Autumn 2022

Date of next review: Autumn 2023

“This 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 running of the school. It is based on the **2010 Equality Act** and as such is focussed clearly around the **9 Protected Characteristics**.

### 1. What is the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan?

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) and action plan covers a three-year period from 2020 to 2023. It integrates our statutory duties in relation to the nine protected characteristics:

The Nine Protected Characteristics	Community Cohesion
1) Age 2) Disability 3) Gender reassignment 4) Marriage and Civil Partnership 5) Pregnancy and Maternity 6) Race 7) Religion or belief 8) Sex 9) Sexual orientation	Additional: Community Cohesion is promoted through the nine Protected characteristics.

The Protected Characteristics cover staff, pupils and people using the services of the school such as parents.

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership, gender reassignment and disability, and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Our SES and Action Plan (objectives) enables us to achieve a framework for action which covers all nine protected characteristics and ensures that we meet our responsibilities of the public sector duties in an inclusive way.

We will continue to meet our statutory duties by reporting annually on the progress of the SES and Action Plan (objectives). This will be reviewed by our Governing body.

### 2. Meeting our duties

#### **2.1 Age**

The protected characteristic of age applies to all ages. Young people experience difficulty accessing employment because of 'lack of experience' whilst older people worry about finding work because of social perceptions of older people - 'can't keep up with the latest technology'.

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's age. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

## **2.2 Disability**

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people which means that we must have due regard to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others.
2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
3. Eliminate disability related harassment.
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
6. Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

What do we understand by "disability"?

*"Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities" (DDA 1995 Part 1 para. 1.1.) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:-*

- *People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis*
- *For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.*

*The Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.*

***RAPS uses the "social model" of disability:***

*This model says that "it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled".*

*We use the social model of disability throughout our work. We understand that the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility criteria for special educational needs provision. This means that disabled pupils may or may not have special educational needs. We believe that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition.*

## **Accessibility**

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

1. Increase access to the curriculum.
2. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access.
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.

### **2.3 Gender Reassignment**

Gender reassignment is defined in the Equality Act as applying to anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes. This definition means that in order to be protected under the Act, a pupil will not necessarily have to be undertaking a medical procedure to change their sex but must be taking steps to live in the opposite gender, or proposing to do so.

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgender 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 & those individuals who have already undertaken gender reassignment - RAPS will provide a supportive environment within its school community. We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's current gender. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

### **2.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership**

The Equality Act says you must not be discriminated against in employment because you are married or in a civil partnership. In the Equality Act marriage and civil partnership means someone who is legally married or in a civil partnership. Marriage can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex.

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's relationship with another individual, whether it be through Marriage or Civil partnership. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

### **2.5 Pregnancy and Maternity**

Protection for pupils from discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity in schools is covered in the Equality Act. This means it is unlawful for schools to treat a pupil less favourably because she becomes pregnant or has recently had a baby, or because she is breastfeeding. Schools will also have to factor in pregnancy and maternity when considering their obligations under the Equality Duty.

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual, through Pregnancy and/or Maternity. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

### **2.6 Race**

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

### **Dealing with racist incidents**

We follow RAPS school policy and the Local Authority Procedures for dealing with racist actions or any form of discrimination.

### **2.7 Religion or Belief**

The Equality Act defines "religion" as being any religion, and "belief" as any religious or philosophical belief. A lack of religion or a lack of belief are also protected characteristics. These definitions are fairly broad and the concepts of religion and belief therefore must be

construed in accordance with Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights and with existing case law. This means that to benefit from protection under the Act, a religion or belief must have a clear structure and belief system, and should have a certain level of cogency, seriousness and cohesion, and not be incompatible with human dignity.

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's Religion or Belief. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

## **2.8 Sex (Gender) equality**

The Equality Act 2010 says you must not be discriminated against because:

- you are (or are not) a particular sex
- someone thinks you are the opposite sex (this is known as discrimination by perception)
- you are connected to someone of a particular sex (this is known as discrimination by association)

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

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

## **2.9 Sexual orientation**

The Equality Act 2010 says you mustn't be discriminated against because you're gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual. This is called discrimination because of sexual orientation.

Discrimination which is against the Equality Act is unlawful.

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's sexual orientation. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

## **2.10 Additional - Community Cohesion**

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

## **3. Our school values and visions**

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

- We strive to make the best possible provision for all pupils/parents, 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. We take the view that inclusion is: "The process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity therefore to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life." We do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.
- We know that equalities 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, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and try to involve them in policy review.
- We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in our school.

#### **4. Our school within Sunderland's profile**

Sunderland is a city of 190,000 people.

There are 110 schools in Sunderland, including 83 Primary schools, 17 Secondary schools 7 special schools, 3 pupil referral units. Some of these schools are academies.

Richard Avenue Primary School is large primary school within The City of Sunderland. It serves a mixed catchment area, currently numbers are rising. Our School is a multicultural school with a large percentage of pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. We currently have 17 different languages spoken, with a large proportion of pupils being Bi Lingual.

#### **5. Collecting and analysing equality information for pupils at Richard Avenue Primary School**

Richard Avenue Primary is an inclusive school. 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/students in the following ways:

- Attainment and progress measures
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Attendance at Extended School activities
- Complaints of Racial, Hate, Bullying, HBT incidents
- School termly census (Autumn, Summer & PLASC in Spring) – Religion, Age, Gender, Disability & Race

Any issues identified have been added to the SES action plan.

#### **6. Collecting and analysing equality information for employment and governance at Richard Avenue Primary School**

Richard Avenue Primary School is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

Richard Avenue Primary School also 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 local population.

We currently employ 48 staff at Richard Avenue Primary School to undertake a range of duties.

We have:

- 42 females & 6 males
- No registered disabled staff
- 41 Staff are White British and 7 staff are Bengali

The school workforce census enables us to collate data on staff relating to gender, race and disability. All staff vacancies are filled using the Local Authority application forms which contain requests for information relating to ethnicity, gender and disability.

All information is kept on the school's central database.

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

- Applicants for employment (via local authority recruitment forms)
- Staff profile
- Staff attendance
- Governing body profile
- Attendance on staff training events
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Appraisal

Any issues identified have been added to the SES action plan.

We have been mindful of the Laws relating to confidentiality when devising this Scheme and Action Plan (objectives). Although there is a statutory duty to share information about the school's 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 General Data Protection Regulation 2018, any analysis of sensitive information is undertaken by a senior member of the school staff.

## **7. Consultation and involving people**

Through a variety of different consultation exercises, RAPS endeavours to involve as many people as possible from our community in the consultation exercises.

Consultation takes place with the following:

- Discussions at school council
- Contact with parent/carers
- Discussions at staff meetings, governing bodies and cluster groups
- Contact with local community groups

During discussions, the following good practice was identified:

- Accessible toilet, sluice, wall hung nappy changing mat & ceiling hoist
- Staff well trained on the needs of specifically identified children
- Friendly and approachable staff – with male and female role models
- Procedures in place to meet any medical needs
- Care plans in place with good support from the School nursing team
- Proactive in meeting pastoral needs
- Admission form criteria includes information on disability
- High standards in effectively implementing inclusive practices across the school

- A high quality curriculum meeting pupil needs
- Key policies in place – SEN & Inclusion, Pastoral Care and Discipline, Anti-bullying.
- A welcoming school - with an Inclusive feel
- SEN Support Plan's in place for pupils with specific needs
- Discussions also identified needs not already met

## **8. What we have achieved so far**

This section details what we have achieved so far in relation to the equality duties and celebrating the outcomes.

### **Race equality**

We have had limited, reported racist incidents in school.

### **Disability equality**

Currently we have no disabled pupils or staff with accessibility problems. However, we do have an accessible toilet with additional sluice, wall hung nappy changing mat & ceiling hoist. We have been proactive in meeting the specific needs of pupils in the future.

### **Gender equality**

Where we have identified differences in attainment our action plans promote equality of provision and opportunity for all.

**In addition we believe that Richard Avenue Primary school can also celebrate the following good practice:**

### **Community Cohesion.**

In addition to the detailed description given above, we also undertake the following:

Teaching, learning and curriculum – Our curriculum is fully accessible to all children. Parents are regularly informed of the learning to take place both in newsletters and through open meetings. All correspondence sent home is available from the school office in larger type – should it be requested, we also provide bilingual language support as required. We feel our curriculum has a global perspective, enabling children to see themselves in context of the wider world community. Our older children, through the PSHE and RE curriculum, have a sound understanding of difference and how different is neither better or worse – it is something to be celebrated.

### **Engagement and extended services.**

We have good active and supportive relationship with extended services provision delivered from our Community facility.

## **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 the nine protected characteristics (race, disability, (Sex) gender, sexual orientation, age & religion and belief, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership and pregnancy & maternity.

All school policies are reviewed over a 3 year period.

## **10. Other School Policies**

We have used our existing school policies to inform our SES. These include:

- School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- SEN & Inclusion policy
- *DDA*
- *Accessibility policy*
- Racist incidence policy
- Anti -Bullying policy
- Whistle blowing policy

## **11. Roles and Responsibilities**

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this Scheme and Action Plan.
- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this Scheme, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.
- The Headteacher supported by the Senior Assistant Head Teacher and the Assistant Head Teacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this scheme.
- Our 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, 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 all visitors to the school, including parents/carers and visiting organisations offering a service are adhering to our commitment to equality.

## **12. Publicising our scheme**

Our Single Equality scheme will be made accessible to all persons within our local and school community in the following ways:

- School website
- Staff and parent newsletter

## **13. Annual Review of Progress**

We will continue to review annually the outcomes of the Action plan (objectives) which include:

- Reporting to staff and governors
- Celebrating what we have achieved in relation to promoting Single equality (which includes Community Cohesion).
- Identifying new priorities.



# Single Equality Scheme

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It is based on the 2010 Equality Act and as such is focussed clearly around the 9 Protected Characteristics.

It integrates our statutory duties in relation to the nine protected characteristics:

- 1) Age
- 2) Disability
- 3) Gender reassignment
- 4) Marriage and Civil Partnership
- 5) Pregnancy and Maternity
- 6) Race
- 7) Religion or belief
- 8) Sex
- 9) Sexual orientation

Additional: Community Cohesion at RAPS is also promoted through the nine Protected characteristics.

The Protected Characteristics cover staff, pupils, governors, parents, visitors. It is embedded in our ethos, curriculum at RAPS and our British Values, to ensure we educate our children to value and uphold these characteristics.