

Equality & Diversity Policy



Produced by	
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Date Amended	02.02.22 approved by <i>Leighton Reed</i>

This or any policy can be made available in a range of formats, large print or translation.

1. Introduction

Valley School is a primary special school, with a specialist nursery, located in Bramhall, Stockport. It caters for pupils who have learning difficulties and complex needs, including profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder.

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Children & Families Act 2014
- Stockport Statement on Equality and Diversity

In all our work we are committed to:-

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant **protected characteristic** and persons who do not share it

The **protected characteristics** are:-

age
disability
gender reassignment
pregnancy and maternity
marriage/civil partnership
race
religion or belief
sex
sexual orientation

Pupils at Valley School are entitled to be valued equally, irrespective of their age, their ability, their gender, their race, their cultural background, or their religious beliefs. They are entitled to be safeguarded and protected.

They are entitled to have access to educational opportunities that are diverse and of assured quality, and to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that promotes their personal development and meets their individual needs.

The 'curriculum' is understood to mean the totality of what pupil's experience throughout their school lives.

Adults at Valley School are entitled to be valued equally. The school values diversity amongst staff, parents, volunteers and helpers. Discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics is unacceptable and will be challenged.

In staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria. In this area the school complies fully with the LA's Equal Opportunities (Employment) Policy Statement, which states that

"This LEA / Governing Body confirms its opposition to discrimination in employment and commits itself to a comprehensive programme of equal opportunity. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the recruitment, selection, training and promotion of staff is based solely on the criteria of merit and ability. No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status, domestic circumstances, age, sexuality, disability, trade union activity, political and religious beliefs."

2. Aims and Values

Valley School is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At Valley School we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and achieve all five outcomes of **'Every Child Matters'** (be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being);
- provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- prepare children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information:
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
- actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

To achieve these aims we will:

- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community;
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage;
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others.

3. Leadership, Management and Governance

Valley School is committed to:

- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our **Equality and Diversity Policy** is followed.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation;
- meet requirements to publish equality schemes;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;
- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

The Headteacher

It is the headteacher's responsibility to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy;
- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;

- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body and LA as required.

4. Policy Planning and Review

In relation to our duty to develop and publish equality schemes in relation to both gender and disability, at Valley School we consider all aspects of diversity and equality within our School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Policy planning and development

- In the planning and development stage of policy-making, we will ensure we have consulted and taken into account stakeholder views.
- All improvement plans will be designed with an element of impact assessment built in to monitor the success of each activity.
- The impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity will be reviewed to address any areas of inequality. Eg. Achievement and attainment will be analysed to ensure progress for all, especially in relation to any identified disadvantaged groups; attendance and exclusion data will be reviewed to ensure no over-representation of any one group.)
- Our target-setting processes ensure appropriate, challenging targets are set in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual pupils / cohorts.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- Each pupil's progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status.
- In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the school meets its duty to positively promote diversity. (Eg. Lesson plans record evidence of differentiation and texts are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity.)
- The data collected is used to inform further school planning, target-setting and decision-making.

Reviewed January 2020

Agreed: Governing Body Meeting

Signed:

Review: Spring 2022