



**THE FEDERATION OF
LOWER HALSTOW & NEWINGTON CEP SCHOOLS**

**SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY
And Accessibility Plan**

Approved	Team	Review Date
June 2016	FGB	June 2019

Introduction

The Federation of Lower Halstow and Newington CEP ('the Federation') is inclusive and focuses on the well-being of every child and member of our community and considers all members to be of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our Federation community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole Federation.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the Federation provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6th 2012
2. Publish Equality Objectives (Action Plan) at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012,

This policy describes how the Federation is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the Federation is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations for staff and governors

Appendix 2 shows the Federation’s Equality Objectives for 2016 – 2020 in an Equality Action Plan

Development of this policy

It is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and providing an inclusive Federation.

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted framework, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act is also included in our Federation development plan and the school websites.

There are also references in the behaviour and anti-bullying, admissions, and SEN policies as well as minutes of relevant meetings.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our Safer Recruitment policy.

What we are going to eliminate – discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion and training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the Federation. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The Federation policy on Behaviour and Anti Bullying takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The Federation challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

There is guidance in the Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy on how all incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our Federation and how we dealt with them. We complete the LA online Racial and Bullying Incident form and take actions to reduce re-occurrence of incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our Federation community very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. This includes attendance data. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.
- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired or Gypsy Rome Traveller pupil joins our Federation.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able"
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils
- We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan 2016- 20 designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the Federation's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the Federation, community and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events, e.g. British Values Week, Diversity days, Christian Aid Week.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole Federation community we:

- Review any relevant feedback from the stakeholders of the community.
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school (PASS);
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

Publish Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/School Improvement Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our Federation's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups.

Our Equality Objectives for 2016 –2020

- All pupils to make progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achieve a year on year (over 3 years) reduction in the attainment gap in reading, writing and mathematics at KS2; between pupils with SEND and non-SEND pupils, Pupil Premium and non- Pupil Premium pupils, FSM and non-FSM pupils and between boys and girls
- Achieve a year on year (over 3 years) reduction in the % of fixed term exclusions for pupils with protected characteristics
- Achieve a balance of genders, Pupil Premium pupils, FSM pupils and EAL pupils in After School Clubs

We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This is part of our school development plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every four years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

Roles and responsibilities

We expect all members of the Federation community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, where necessary, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the Federation complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body team keeps aspects of its commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personal issues and the school environment.

Executive Headteacher and Leadership Team

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Head of School have day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the Federation's principles, for example, In providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- support different groups in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up- to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the Federation as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

Key Contacts

Staff responsible for Equalities: Cathy Walker, Executive Headteacher; Trudi Godfrey, Head of School, Newington CEP School; Simon Krafft, Head of School, Lower Halstow School

Lead governor: Chair of Governors

Equal Opportunities for Staff

- This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the Federation reflects the diversity of our community.
- 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.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupil and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receives appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

The governing body will review the information about equalities in the policy regularly and make adjustments as appropriate.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available

- on the school website
- as paper copies in the school office
- referred to in the Staff Code of Conduct
- as part of induction for new staff

We ensure that the Federation community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the worship and assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

Appendix 1

Checklist of Key Equality Considerations for Federation staff and governors

- The Federation collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the Federation provides
- The Federation analyses Pupil Achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when their trends or patterns indicate a need
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes
- The Federation ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The Federation ensures that visitors to the Federation understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through Worship and assemblies, the School Council and Diversity days
- The Federation monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the Federation community
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and Worship and assemblies
- The Federation takes part in events to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender
- The school's environments are accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to each school – including acoustic environment
- Open evenings and other events which parent/carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered
- Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled

Appendix 2 Equality Action Plan (including Accessibility Plan) 2016 – 2020

Public Sector Equality Duty	Equality Objectives	Actions	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible	Time Frames	Progress commentary
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	<p><i>-Ensure all incidents are reported to Parent/carers of all involved parties</i></p> <p><i>-All incidents are dealt with equally and fairly using Federation policies and procedures</i></p> <p><i>-Ensure a clear evidence trail which is held centrally</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Involvement of appropriate adults and possibly Police</i> <i>• Restorative Justice approach and apology</i> <i>• Fair consequences given, commensurate with the incident</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Regular checks and talking to victim and perpetrator</i> <i>• Sanctions imposed are adhered to and agreed</i> <i>• Sanctions are recorded as part of an evidence trail</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Class Teacher</i> <i>• Class TA</i> <i>• HoS</i> <i>• EHT</i> 	<i>Daily/weekly/monthly</i>	
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups	<p><i>-Ensure all vulnerable groups have equality of opportunity to activities offered by the school</i></p> <p><i>-The gap in standards is narrowed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Variety of After school and lunch time clubs on offer</i> <i>• Use of Pupil Premium funding</i> <i>• Support and interventions used to “narrow the gap”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Registers of attendance are kept</i> <i>• Pupil Premium Grant spending published</i> <i>• Analysis of data for different groups published</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Classteacher</i> <i>• Leader of Activity</i> <i>• HoS</i> <i>• EHT</i> 	<i>Weekly/Termly/Annually</i>	

	<i>between different groups</i>					
Foster good relations between different groups	<p><i>-Ensure the school meets the needs of all pupils, parent/carers and staff</i></p> <p><i>-Ensure that all events held by the school are accessible to the needs of different groups</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• School encourages participation and attendance at a variety of events organised by stakeholders associated with the school</i> <i>• Events organised by the school are held in accessible venues at times which enable different groups to attend</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Attendance at events noted</i> <i>• Events held in school hall/ Sports Hall/classroom/School Field dependant on activity.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Classteacher</i> <i>• HoS</i> <i>• EHT</i> 	<i>Termly</i>	