

Southwark Council

Schools' Single Equality Scheme 2021 – 2025

I. THE SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

The school wholly believes that racism, intolerance and discrimination of any kind are wrong and it will not tolerate racist or discriminatory attitudes among its staff, pupils or those who visit the school. Staff, when they encounter it or when it is brought to their attention, will always challenge racist or intolerant attitudes and behaviour. The school will not tolerate racist, sexist or any other discriminatory taunting or bullying.

The school aims to ensure that it is wholly accessible in curricular, premises and communication terms to all the people who may be served by it. To this end we will focus on all access strategies which will aim to overcome the barriers to learning or participation experienced by disabled people served by or serving the school. The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, regardless of gender, age, race, belief, sexual orientation or disability.

The school is committed to delivering effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as we believe it is essential in order for young people to be able to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The school believes that by learning about religions and cultures of the world it helps pupils to understand their own world and their place in it. By learning about how others live their lives, pupils show greater empathy and tolerance towards others.

No member of staff, prospective member of staff, or pupil will receive unfair or unlawful treatment due to race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status or religious or political beliefs. The school also makes a substantial effort to promote equality of opportunity for all and encouraging good relationships with all cultural and racial groups.

2. CHAIN OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the policy is fully implemented. All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both in a general sense as employees and more specifically as it relates to their area of work.

3. ETHNICITY

Our commitment to the equality of race and ethnicity will form part of the School Equality Scheme 2021–2022. We will report on progress annually and the review of our race equality policy will be brought in line with the review for the School Equality Scheme.

We have no statistically sizeable gap between ethnic groups in KS2 attainment and progress, and there are a number of support systems in place to help any pupils with concerns about their achievement in core subjects.

Our focus for 2021-22 is:

- To maintain high attainment outcomes for all pupils of all ethnic groups.
- Ensure that the experience of Black pupils and adults in the school is understood and where possible improved.
- To ensure regular listening to the experiences of children, staff and parents.
- Foster understanding and respect for the culture and faith of all of our learners and their families by consulting with different ethnic and cultural groups on the appropriateness of the vision and future of our school
- Encourage learners and their families from all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects
- of school life leading by example to emphasise mutual respect and honesty between different groups including children and teachers
- Counter myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations and ensure that the teaching and environment helps children to learn to challenge prejudice and stereotyping and to value diversity. This is achieved through curriculum based activities, class discussions, visits.
- Make visible to the whole school community the necessity of fairness and trust through the curriculum and our relationships with pupils.

We will evidence our effectiveness by demonstrating:

- Widely shared sense of the contribution of different communities to a shared vision.
- Strong sense of individual rights and responsibilities within the school community.
- All children and parents feel they are being treated fairly and have the same opportunities.
- Strong and positive relationships.

4. DISABILITY UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT

Our Scheme shows how we promote equality across all areas of the school, to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users.

When carrying out our functions, we will have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between all pupils regardless of disability or Special Education Need
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the equalities act (2010).
- Eliminate disability related harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation of disabled people in public life.
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
- Monitor staff and pupils by disability.

The School Development Plan priorities are always with a view to making the school more accessible to those with disabilities or learning needs. Where feasible or relevant, key strategies and policies are made with provision for the inclusion of SEND pupils or staff with disabilities as evidenced by our Accessibility Policy, SEN policy and Individual Education Plans, as well as the adaptation of classroom content where possible to make the curriculum accessible to all (see below).

Charles Dickens School Accessibility Plan regarding physical access. The school is in an old Victorian building with a lift to the main floors in the main floors. The original Victorian doors are not accessible to those in wheel chairs but new doors and additions are fully accessible. We also have disabled toilets and wash facilities on each main floor and in the external classrooms. We have mobile hearing loops in some classrooms.

Access to the curriculum: In order to increase access to education for disabled pupils, we shall:

- Offer a differentiated curriculum, where appropriate, to individual learners. We have a number of resources to assist children with SEN to learn in a flexible way.
- Recognise our legal responsibility to ensure that disabled people have the opportunity to take part in 'all aspects of public life'. Hence any member of our community with an identified disability will be fully encouraged to take part in every aspect of the curriculum and extended curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of information to disabled learners, to the standard of which is provided in writing for learners who are not disabled (including being an autism friendly school).
- Provide, where possible, support, assistance and care to disabled learners to enable them to lead independent lives

We plan to improve equal opportunities for disabled employees by:

- ensuring all policies and procedures regarding equality and equal opportunities are up to date and as supportive as possible to the needs of disabled staff members
- continuing to consider the welfare and needs of our disabled staff
- continuing to provide support to ensure disabled staff gain access to the same opportunities as other staff

5. THE GENDER EQUALITY DUTIES

We welcome the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the act. We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, including domestic
- Violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.
- Gender monitoring information is gathered from the census on a termly basis from the School's database from information provided by pupils and staff when applying to the school. In terms of targets for pupil achievement by gender, it is the responsibility of the class teacher to monitor individual pupil achievement and this is overseen by senior leaders. We appreciate that schools play a key role in shaping the values and attitudes of children and young people and we strive to take a lead in challenging gender stereotyping.

Charles Dickens Primary School operates an equal pay policy, all employees are considered on the basis of merit and not gender when applying for roles or promotion, there is no gender pay gap.

We provide classroom based lessons on gender issues such as LGBTQ+ bullying. These appear in our PSHCE scheme of work. We also have representation of LGBTQ+ characters and issues in our school library. The school has achieved Unicef Rights Respecting award level 2.

Any incidents of sexism or anti LGBTQ+ are actively challenged by all staff.

We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of transphobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

6. RELIGION AND BELIEF

Our school recognises the need to consider the actions outlined by the Equality Act 2010 (Religion & Belief). At Charles Dickens School we always take into account the need for policies and procedures which are inclusive and provide equal opportunities for all.

The school aims to encourage the pupils to learn about and respect all different religions and beliefs and actively encourage this through:

- International Event
- Provision of halal meat in the lunch menu and catering to dietary requirements of pupils from all different religions/belief systems
- RE lessons covering a wide range of beliefs and religions
- Unicef Rights Respecting School commitment

We recognise the diversity of our local community and aim to work well with different faith groups.

- Our religious education curriculum encompasses many different aspects of different faiths and we will endeavour to ensure that all children leave Charles Dickens Primary School in year 6 with a good understanding of the main world religions covered by the primary curriculum. The School is committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and exclusion on the basis of religion or belief.

7. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Our school recognises the need to protect students from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation. We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia and transphobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

At Charles Dickens Primary School we include realistic images of LGBTQ+ people and the contributions they have made to different aspects of the curriculum through the RSE resources and lessons. Sex is portrayed as taking place in a loving relationship, whether that is between a married, unmarried or same sex or other.

Homophobic bullying, language and stereotypes will be strongly challenged within the school.

We will do this by respecting the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation.

We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBTQ+ people across services and employment.

The school uses a wide variety of resources to raise staff and pupil awareness of their rights and the rights of others; the PSCHE curriculum links and Unicef Rights Respecting School award level 2.

8. AGE

We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large.

We aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of age.

- Ensuring staff health is not adversely affected by work and good quality advice and support is available and accessible to all.
- Embedding of the UN Rights of the Child

9. POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY FRAMEWORK

Our School states clearly that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and will not be tolerated which reflects our commitment to preventing harassment and bullying on grounds of race, disability, gender, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We have set out the measures that our school will take to address bullying in our Behaviour Policy which is reviewed every year.

Any incidents that occur are recorded and then reviewed to help prevent further issues.

Bullying will not be tolerated or ignored in any of its forms within our school community. All staff will deal seriously with any report by victims or concerned children about physical, mental or verbal intimidation of pupils or adults. Our aim is to develop a culture in which victims feel they can talk to any adult in the school about issues relating to bullying either to themselves or others and where bullying is seen by all as unacceptable. It is made quite clear to all pupils, parents and adults that any kind of bullying is completely unacceptable.

All members of the school community have a legal responsibility and a moral duty to challenge behaviour and/ or language which they, or another, may perceive to be anti-inclusive. The most appropriate way to manage such an incident may be on an informal one-to-one level, however Charles Dickens Primary School has established respect at work, grievance and harassment policies which are available to all staff should further support be needed.

10. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

In our School we ensure that we observe the principles of equal opportunities in how we employ, develop and treat our staff.

Charles Dickens Primary School's arrangements for ensuring that the principles of equal opportunities in employment are observed and implemented are below.

We follow Southwark council's guidelines for recruitment and selection; ensuring equal opportunities practices are maintained.

The HR officer is responsible for monitoring the arrangements for selection and recruitment. With regard to selection for redundancy, restructuring, redeployment and retirement we follow the legal guidelines and Trust policies. Senior management are responsible for the training and development of the all staff.

Promotion, Performance appraisal and Award for pay, bonus and allowances are monitored by the Head Teacher and LGB. In terms of Grievance, Disciplinary measures, Harassment and Discrimination, these are all monitored according to the school's policies

11. RELEVANT POLICIES

These all adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and have been created with full consideration of the needs of SEND pupils and staff with disabilities, equality of opportunities and inclusion of all ethnic groups, cultures, genders and sexualities. Relevant policies include:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Behaviour and Pastoral Care
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Curriculum
- Safeguarding (Child Protection)
- Anti-bullying
- Respect At Work
- Single Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pay policy
- Appraisal policy

12. CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION

In our work to improve our services with regard to equality and diversity, we work with:

- Stakeholders, whom we consult to determine policy,
- LGB
- Parents and Carers at the AGM
- SEND Pupils and their parents/carers

There are many opportunities throughout the year for pupils, parents/carers and the wider community to get involved and feedback. These include:

- Parents meetings
- School council
- Stakeholder surveys
- Governing Body and committee meetings

13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The LGB accepts their responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment, as outlined in the scheme.

The Charles Dickens School Governing Body ensures that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. All major policies need to be approved by the Governing Body before they can be implemented and it is at the approval stage that they ensure all duties and requirements are met before signing and approving the school policies.

The Governing Body will monitor the delivery of the Schools Equality Scheme through the Head Teacher's report once a year. They will ensure that all staff understand the importance of the scheme and their role in delivering it through the Head Teacher, staff handbook and staff appraisals.

The School's Equality Scheme will be linked to the School Improvement Plan, and it will be the Governing Body's role to incorporate the aims and priorities of scheme into the School improvement plan, ensuring that the interests of both are aligned.

14. ACTION PLAN

Our action plan shows explicit objectives for race, disability and gender issues and also objectives for religion or belief and sexual orientation:

Current Action Plan Objectives – see 2022/23 equalities plan objectives

15. REPORTING AND REVIEWING THE SCHEME

The Headteacher will review and revise the Schools Equality Scheme every three years, making the draft available to parents and governors for comment.

The annual objectives will be produced every school year and will be made available on the school website with paper copies printed on request from the school office.