

Sheredes Primary School

Equality

Scheme

2021/22

May 2021

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1: Vision and Values

Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

SCHOOL MISSION

We are a school passionate about children's education. Our vision is Excellence in Education; therefore our core purpose is to develop a child's confidence, all round ability and unique talents to the highest level that they can achieve. Our staff are dedicated and forward thinking and both children and adults enjoy working in a friendly, calm and purposeful environment.

SCHOOL AIMS

Our core purpose is to enable all children to develop their confidence, all round ability and unique talents to the highest level that they can achieve. Therefore, we aim to :

- value and respect all children as individuals and to develop their confidence and self esteem so to encourage them to want to excel for themselves and for the school community
- teach a rich, broad, balanced, bespoke and relevant curriculum that encompasses the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum, so that all children acquire learning skills and a knowledge and understanding of the world we live in.
- help children develop lively, imaginative, enquiring minds; the ability to question, argue rationally and problem solve; the ability to become independent learners
- develop children's understanding and regard for the rights and beliefs of others, and a concern for the environment and the world we live in, in order that they develop as considerate, well-mannered, informed, responsible, positive and active citizens
- Provide a happy, caring, secure, stimulating and organised learning environment that acts as a motivational force for all children and encourages their participation in its creation and care
- widen learning opportunities so that children are introduced to new and enriched learning experiences.

We believe in the contribution and value of all children *and* adults within the school community and we show this in the way we relate to one another. We are committed to supporting the continuous professional learning of all staff through development and training.

SCHOOL ETHOS

We believe ours is a happy, caring school in which each and every member of the school community is valued and respected by every other member. We are committed to developing the attributes of kindness, confidence, resilience and fearlessness. Our belief in treating one another with kindness and consideration is encapsulated in our school prayer:

*Dear Lord,
This day we pray
We may befriend another.
To see their needs
And share with them
Warmth and caring in our school
Amen.*

We believe children learn best in a calm, purposeful atmosphere and we believe in creating a stimulating, organised learning environment in which every child is encouraged to realise his or her potential. The endeavours of all children are valued, and achievements are celebrated and shared. We believe in setting high standards in every aspect of school life, for example, presentation of work, dress, manners, speech, attitudes to others and work. We are committed to the values of truth, integrity and honesty.

In establishing the tone of the school, we aim for an atmosphere relaxed, purposeful and devoid of tension. Children work best in a calm, friendly environment, where the qualities of common sense, courtesy and consideration for others may be exercised. To this end, we have a positive approach to behaviour and encourage children to consider others in all aspects of school life, by learning to develop a sense of self-discipline and a respect for others and the school. This is considered an important part of their personal and social development. Our school rules are few and simple – see **Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying**

Policy. Certain standards of behaviour are expected and in the case of repeated misbehaviour, please see the Head.

Our **curriculum** is carefully planned – see **Curriculum plans on our website** – and care is taken to build in differentiated activities according to the needs of the children in short term planning.

Our school topics aim to maximise natural links between subjects but curriculum areas are also taught as separate subjects. The aim is to make the learning experiences for the children as cohesive and interesting as possible. We believe that children learn most effectively from first hand experiences and we endeavour to provide them whenever possible.

Promoting equality and tackling discrimination:

At Sheredes Primary we are committed to ensuring quality of education and opportunity for all pupils and staff. We constantly aim to provide a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and celebrate the diversity of experience that our community brings. We welcome differences and celebrate different cultures, respecting the needs of the individual, the group and the school community as a whole. Our displays and resources we purchase reflect this. The achievement of all pupils is monitored and we use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We make and continue to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible to all pupils. At Sheredes we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

We also seek to extend the understanding of our pupils in order to prepare them for an adult life in a multicultural and diverse society, which may be more diverse than our own local community at the present time. We actively promote British values; see **Promoting British Values** on our website.

When possible, we link with other schools and establishments with a more diverse or different ethnic community locally and internationally, and invite visitors into our school to describe their own faiths, beliefs and ways of life. We will encourage positive attitudes towards disabled people and this may include visitors with a disability sharing their experiences with the pupils. The pupils in our school are taught to respect all visitors and approach these opportunities with a real spirit of enquiry.

In fulfilling the legal obligations in Section 3, we are guided by the following nine guiding principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as 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
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled

people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people

- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents

- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled

- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status

- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people

- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds

- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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 consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled

- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds

- both women and men, and girls and boys.

- gay people as well as straight.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled

- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds

- both women and men, girls and boys

- gay people as well as straight.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7). The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

2: School Context

The characteristics of our school

A brief description of our school and its community setting

The school takes in pupils from a wide catchment area and is non-denominational, welcoming pupils from all faiths.

10% of pupils have English as an additional language; below the national average. This represents 20 different languages, with very small numbers of each.

Approximately 6% of pupils are known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals, or have been known to be eligible in the last six years; this is below the national average.

The school's deprivation indicator is below the national average.

The attendance trend is above the national average, with the percentage of sessions missed due to overall absence and persistent absentees (absent for 10% or more sessions) below the national average.

Approximately 15% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and /or a disability, which is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement or EHC plan is below the national average.

The school experienced a large influx of pupils in 2008/9 and 2009/10 across all age groups, due to its expansion to two forms of entry. Stability has been above the national average for the last five years.

3: Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

The purpose of our scheme is to set out how our practice and policies meet the **general** and **specific** duties.

Our school is **committed to meeting the public sector equality duty (PSED)** which came into force in April 2011, replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender. The PSED is sometimes **referred to as the general duty** and consists of three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Act also introduced specific duties which require schools to:

- **Publish annually information** quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- To set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

The PSED extends schools' equality duties to all protected characteristics:

- age (for staff only)
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender (sex)
- gender identity and reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for staff only).

Disability

The disability provisions in this Act are different from those for other protected characteristics in a number of ways, including a more complex definition of what constitutes discrimination. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled pupil can benefit from what we offer to the same extent as that of a pupil without a disability.

At Sheredes Primary and Nursery we **implement accessibility plans** which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Community Cohesion

We are committed to promoting Community Cohesion as it supports good practice in educating pupils about equality and diversity. It contributes to our wider efforts to provide a broad, balanced curriculum. We continue to increase our focus on helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

We are committed to providing:

- teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them
- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- a programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through visits and meetings with members of different communities, for example in our focused weeks
- support for pupils for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English and all subjects.

4: Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

Chain of accountability

The Board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

Commitment to implementation

The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively. Every term, SMT and subject leaders will report to the Headteacher on actions and progress. Every year there will be a report on equality and diversity to the Governors meeting.

All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

Responsibility for	Key person
Single equality scheme	Head and Personnel Committee
Disability equality (including bullying incidents)	Head, SMT and Personnel Committee
SEN/LDD (including bullying incidents)	Head, SMT and Personnel
Accessibility	Head, INCO, Resources, Curriculum Com.
Gender equality (including bullying incidents)	Head, SMT, Personnel
Race equality (including racist incidents)	Head, SMT, Personnel
Equality and diversity in curriculum content	Head, subject leaders, Curriculum Com
Equality and diversity in pupil achievement	Head, subject leaders, Curriculum Com.
Equality and diversity – behaviour and exclusions	Head, SMT, Curriculum Com.
Participation in all aspects of school life	Head, SMT, Curriculum Com.
Impact assessment	Head, SMT, Chair, Committees
Engagement /Stakeholder consultation	Head, INCO, Chair
Policy review	Head, SMT, Chair, Personnel
Communication and publishing	Head, Chair

Commitment to review

The school equality scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes.

Commitment to publish

Two specific duties:

1. Schools should publish information which shows compliance with the PSED:

We are committed to sharing information about our equality work. At Sheredes Primary we will publish information annually on our work to **eliminate discrimination/harassment, advance equality and foster good relations**. Equality information will be available in our school prospectus, on our website, for example our School Profile updated annually, and in Governing Body Minutes in the Lower Hall. We will also share information through newsletters and face to face meetings. We publish the following information:

In our prospectus: our bullying and behaviour policies

In our prospectus and School Profile: Attainment data which shows how pupils with different characteristics are performing

In our School Profile: Evidence of work done in response to analysis that:

-supports boys and girls improve their performance in writing,

-that makes improvements to the physical environment to enable disabled pupils and members of our community to take better advantage of all services and facilities.

-that supports pupils with special educational needs

In our School Profile, newsletters and Focused Weeks information we publish information on:

-aspects of our curriculum which explore different cultures and promote understanding of different religions.

-our links with other schools abroad which enable pupils to exchange experiences with children from different backgrounds

In our School Profile, how we are working with our community to foster good relations.

2. Schools should publish at least one equality objective

Our equality objectives are rooted in our commitment to advancing equality in line with the PSED.

We will continue to maintain an equality action plan, that aligns with our school development plan and accessibility plan. We will annually review the impact of our actions to meet our objectives, and update the published information.

Commitment to action

Governors will:

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils
- Congratulate examples of good practice from the school and among individual managers, staff and pupils
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties

The Headteacher and senior staff will:

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures
- Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders
- Ensure that managers and staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
- Hold line managers accountable for effective policy implementation
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils
- Highlight good practice from departments, individual managers, staff and pupils
- Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

Line managers will:

- Respond to consultation requests by creating opportunities for pupils and staff to share their comments, suggestions and feedback, ensuring that all voices are heard
- Implement the school's equality scheme, holding staff accountable for their behaviour and providing support and guidance as necessary
- Be accountable for the behaviour of the staff team, individual members of staff and pupils
- Use informal and formal procedures as necessary to deal with 'difficult' situations
- Behave in accordance with the school's policies, leading by example
- Respond appropriately to the behaviour of pupils and staff, as a whole, and individuals (praising/challenging as necessary)
- Contribute to managing the implementation of the school's equality scheme

All staff: teaching and non-teaching will:

- Contribute to consultations and reviews
- Raise issues with line managers which could contribute to policy review and development
- Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures
- Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme
- Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme

All pupils will actively engage with the aims, values and actions of this scheme

All parents/carers will support the school in the implementation of this scheme

Statement of Compliance

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age.

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 a person who is 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.
- We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.
- We will provide regular training for staff to enable them to deal effectively with prejudice-related incidents
- Tackling discrimination and anti-bullying reporting and recording all forms of prejudice-related incidents for example racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism.

5: Engagement

Involving our learners, parents/carers and others

Engagement – Participation and Involvement

We engage and involve all relevant stakeholders in a variety of ways, taking into account a range of needs, such as:

- One to one meetings
- Invitation to consultation meetings, coffee mornings, new stakeholder meetings
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Informal meetings and discussions
- Pupil discussions and interviews
- Staff and governor consultation, e.g. through staff meetings and governor committee meetings
- Meetings with partners and community organisations
- School newsletters and website

In the development of this scheme we have welcomed the participation and involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities. When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we have and will continue to consider/consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions - parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations. Evidence of this engagement will be included in the published material showing how the duty has been addressed.

6: Using information – Equality Impact Assessment, data and other information

Evaluating the impact in terms of the outcomes

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. It is a way to ensure we meet diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender to judge the impact of our actions. Attainment and value added data provides evidence of our outcomes.

We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of mechanisms, from lesson observations to pupil discussions and interviews. We conduct pupil voice activities such as anti-bullying questionnaires/ happiness audits.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. Grateful thanks to Frances Martin, Herts. LA Lead Adviser for SEN/D and AGT, for the advice and support with this scheme.

7: Our School's Equality Objectives

Key priorities for action

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:

data from RAISE Online
Pupil progress meetings and AM7 data
Consultation/stakeholder engagement through meetings as outlined in section 5
Pupil discussions/interviews/questionnaires, e.g. annual questionnaire, termly happiness audits

Our equality objectives:

Equality Objectives	Protected Characteristic
1. To maintain and build on high standards in English and mathematics; in particular to continue to ensure both boys and girls reach standards and make progress that is better or significantly better than their group nationally and all pupils nationally.	Gender
2. All groups of pupils continue to reach standards or make progress that is better or significantly better than their respective groups nationally, and any attainment gaps between each group and all pupils nationally and all pupils in our school is narrowed wherever possible: regardless of gender, learning need or disability, socio-economic background (FSM) or ethnicity.	Gender Disability Ethnicity and race
3. Maintain a high standard in promoting good understanding and respect for different religions and beliefs.	Religion or belief

8: Setting Equality Objectives Action Plan

Making progress on equality issues

Equality Objectives	Protected Characteristic	R	A	G	General Duty	Responsibility	Measurable Success Indicator	Timing	Review date
1. To maintain and build on high standards in English and mathematics; in particular to continue to ensure both boys and girls reach standards and make progress that is better or significantly better than their group nationally and all pupils nationally.	Gender			X	Advance equality of opportunity	Head, SMT	Both boys and girls make at least good progress and meet targets set across the school and at the end of each Key Stage: FS, KS1 and KS2.	Ongoing	Termly and annually
2. All groups of pupils continue to reach standards or make progress that is better or significantly better than their respective groups nationally, and any attainment gaps between each group and all pupils nationally and all pupils in our school is narrowed wherever possible: regardless of gender, learning need or disability, socio-economic background (FSM) or ethnicity.	Gender Disability Ethnicity and race			X	Advance equality of opportunity	Head, INCO, SMT	Groups make at least good progress and meet challenging targets set across the school and at the end of each Key Stage: FS, KS1 and KS2. SEN/D FSM Ethnicity	Ongoing	Termly and annually
3. Maintain a high standard in promoting good understanding and respect for different religions and beliefs.	Religion or belief			X	Foster good relations	Head, SMT, RE subject leader	Maintain high standard as described and reflected in outcomes of self evaluation, e.g. subject leader monitoring and evaluation outcomes.	Ongoing	Annually