

St Aldhelm's VA Church Primary School



Learning together for Life in all its fullness - John 10:10

Public Sector Equality Duty Statement and Objectives

Legislative Framework

The single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into effect in April 2011 as a result of the Equality Act 2010. It requires public bodies, including schools, to promote equality.

The three main elements of the duty

The PSED has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard (see below for a definition of 'due regard') to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

What does 'due regard' mean?

'Due regard' has been defined in case law and means giving "relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty".

For schools, this means that:

1. Decision makers must be aware of the duty to have due regard when making a decision or taking an action, and must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
2. Schools should consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep them under review on a continuing basis
3. The PSED has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the analysis necessary to comply with the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind

The PSED extends to the following protected characteristics:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender
- Age
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment

For schools, age is a relevant characteristic in considering their duties in their role as an employer but not in relation to pupils.

Specific duties under the PSED

The PSED introduces secondary legislation in the form of specific duties. The specific duties require schools to:

1. Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED – this information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives

What do we do at St Aldhelm's to fulfil our duties under the PSED?

St Aldhelm's VA Church Primary School is committed to the promotion of equality. In this respect:

- We ensure that everyone in school is treated fairly and with respect
- We recognise that people have different needs and that treating people equally does not always involve treating everyone in exactly the same way
- We ensure that school is a safe place for everyone
- We consult with people from different groups and involve them in our decision making
- We recognise that extra support is needed for some pupils to help them achieve their full potential and be successful

To meet our PSED Duty, the school:

- maintains and publishes quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the PSED set out in Clause 149 of the Equality Act, to explain how we have due regard for equality
- publishes information each year about our school population
- formulates and publishes specific and measurable objectives, based on our collected and published evidence, which demonstrate how we plan to tackle inequalities and reduce or remove them
- monitor our equality objectives regularly and report annually on progress towards achieving them

We aim to make sure that no-one experiences less favourable treatment or discrimination relating to the protected characteristics listed above.

The Act does not cover socio- economic circumstances as a protected characteristic. However, in our school, socio -economic circumstances are taken into consideration. This applies particularly to our consideration of how we make most effective use of the Pupil Premium and Sports Grants.

At St Aldhelm's, we recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998. We welcome the general principles of UNCRC and have regard, in particular, for the needs of children and young people who are disadvantaged and vulnerable and their parents and carers. We recognise the emphasis in the OFSTED Education Inspection Framework (2019) on the importance of narrowing the gaps in achievement for disadvantaged children.

Our objectives for 2022 to 2023:

- To narrow the gap in attainment and progress between 'disadvantaged' pupils at our school (this included those who are entitled to Free School Meals, those for whom we

receive Pupil Premium Grant, and those with Special Educational Need or Disability to achieve) and non-disadvantaged children. The key focus of this objective will be continuing to raise attainment in maths and to raise attainment in reading and writing.

- To maintain attendance of 96% for the school overall, and to ensure vulnerable children’s attendance is monitored and supported closely; low attendance can significantly affect attainment and later life chances.
- To provide enrichment opportunities in sports, arts and literature, so that all children, regardless of background, are exposed to life-enhancing cultural experiences. This objective is designed specifically to develop depth and breadth in children’s learning, with a focus on reading.
- These objectives were identified through an analysis of the achievement of identified groups within our school during 2021-2022 whose attainment could be improved.

Responsibility for PSED

We believe it is the responsibility of everyone involved in our school to work together to promote equality of opportunity.

School Community	Responsibility
Governing Body	Involving and engaging the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these. Monitoring progress towards achieving equality objectives. Publishing data and publishing equality objectives.
Headteacher	As above including: Promoting key messages to staff, parents and pupils about equality and what is expected of them and can be expected from the school in carrying out its day to day duties. Ensuring that all school community receives adequate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including pupil awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice-related incidents.
Senior Management Team and Middle Leadership Team	To support the Head as above Leading on actions to achieve our equality objectives. Ensuring fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Teaching Staff	Helping in delivering the right outcomes for pupils. Upholding the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated. Designing and delivering an inclusive curriculum Ensuring that they are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.

Non-Teaching Staff	Supporting the school and the governing body in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders Upholding the commitment made by the head teacher on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated Supporting colleagues within the school community Ensuring that they are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.
Parents	Taking an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these Taking an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.
Pupils	Helping the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality. Upholding the commitment made by the headteacher on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.
Local	Taking an active part in identifying barriers for the school

Information about what our school does to promote equality

Type of information	Evidence available and how this can be obtained
Data about the school population and differences of outcome	
1. Our school has data on its composition broken down by year group, gender, by entitlement to Pupil Premium Grant, and by proficiency in English (EAL).	This information is available on our website.
2. Our school has data which shows % of children within the school who have an identified Special Educational Need and disability. We follow DfE guidance on recording disability in addition to Special Educational Need.	This information is not public as it is not good practice to publish information which due to small numbers would allow individuals to be identified.
3. Our school has data on inequalities of outcome and participation connected with gender, Special Educational Need and disability, and with proficiency in English (EAL). The school also uses data and other evidence provided by the Department of Education or available nationally, to help identify inequalities and the needs of particular groups, such as children entitled to Free School Meals, or those for whom we receive Pupil Premium Grant.	This information is not public as it is not good practice to publish information which due to small numbers would allow individuals to be identified.

<p>4. Our school uses data and other information on inequalities of outcome and participation when setting itself objectives for achievable and measurable improvements.</p>	<p>Our objectives for 2022 to 2023 are based on the following data and other information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment • Progress • Attendance • Engagement in the enrichment opportunities • Prejudice related incidents
<p>Documentation and record-keeping</p>	
<p>5. There are statements of the school’s responsibilities under the Equality Act in various school documents, for example: our equality policy, our School Development Plan (SDP), Pupil Premium Grant report, Sports Grant report, Behaviour Policy.</p>	<p>These can be found in our policies.</p>
<p>6. There are references to the school’s responsibilities under the Equality Act in the minutes of governors’ meetings, staff meetings and senior leadership team meetings.</p>	<p>Governing Body reports and minutes of meetings are available from our Clerk to the Governors. Records of staff meetings are kept – these are not published as they contain child sensitive information.</p>
<p>7. Before introducing important new policies or measures that may have an impact on equality, the school carefully assesses their potential, positive or negative, and keeps a record of the analysis and judgements which it makes.</p>	<p>If you wish to see records relating to particular decisions, please contact: The Clerk to the Governing Body, via the School Office.</p>
<p>Staffing</p>	
<p>8. The school has data on its workforce composition broken down by disability, ethnicity and gender.</p>	<p>If you wish to discuss such information please contact: The Headteacher</p>
<p>9. The school’s programme of staff meetings and continuing professional development (CPD) includes reference to equalities matters, both directly and incidentally.</p>	<p>Examples of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings • INSET and CPD , for teachers, teaching assistants, ancillary and administrative staff

<p>10. There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.</p>	<p>Our school is committed to promoting equality and diversity across its work force; through recruitment and promotion procedures and practices to ensure that no employee or job applicant should receive less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, domestic responsibilities, political or trade union activity or other form of discrimination.</p>
<p>11. Our other policies, including our pay policy, uphold good equalities practice.</p>	<p>Policies are available from the School Office</p>
<p>Behaviour and safety</p>	
<p>12. There are clear procedures for dealing with bullying, including prejudice-related bullying and incidents.</p>	<p>Our policy for responding to bullying, including prejudice-related bullying and incidents, is available on our website.</p>
<p>13. Surveys show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.</p>	<p>Evidence of this comes from our most recent Ofsted report.</p> <p>In addition, we have evidence from our last Parental Survey.</p>
<p>Curriculum</p>	
<p>14. Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils (for example those who have Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged, other vulnerable groups) and there is extra or special provision for certain groups, as appropriate.</p>	<p>If you wish to discuss such support please contact: The Head</p>
<p>15. There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding.</p>	<p>Please see examples in our Curriculum Design, and our planned developments in our School Development Plan 2022-2023</p>
<p>16. There are activities across the curriculum that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</p>	<p>We have a half termly theme for worship, which promotes whole school values and develops children's spiritual, moral and cultural understanding. We review and monitor our PHSE curriculum to develop our practice further in this area.</p>

17. In curriculum materials there are positive images of minority groups from a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.	If you wish to discuss equality matters related to curriculum materials please contact: The Head
Consultation and involvement	
18. The school has procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act (which may sometimes involve targeted consultation).	We have consulted and involved parents and other people through parental surveys and individual parent consultations.
19. The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school, and has regard in these for the concerns of the Equality Act (which may sometimes involve targeted consultation).	We have consulted and involved pupils in the development of the school through The School Council. We have plans for increasing Pupil Voice – see School Development Plan 2022-2023

Concerns

In the event of a concern or issue being raised under the PSE Duty, the following procedures will be followed.

The concern or issue will be dealt with under the guiding principles of the school's published Complaints Procedure, summarised below.

Stage 1: Informal Action

- Parents discuss concerns with the class teacher
- If the teacher is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, phone number and date, and the parent is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated. The teacher may also consult the Headteacher at this stage.
- The teacher ensures that the parent is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, parents are asked if they wish their concern to be considered further.

Stage 2: Referral to the Headteacher

- The Headteacher acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days
- A meeting is arranged (if necessary) with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given.
- The Headteacher investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil would be spoken to as well as any other children or adults involved.
- The Headteacher keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher responds. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the governing body

If the complaint is against the Headteacher, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Chair of the Governing Body.

Stage 3: Review by the Governing Body

- The Chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a Committee of three members of the School's Governing Body within 20 working days.
- The Chair arranges to convene a Complaints Panel elected from members of the Governing Body. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible. **The Chair of the Panel should contact Somerset Governor Services (01823 356609) for advice prior to holding the Panel Hearing.**
- The Chair of the Committee will contact all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence.
- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
- After the meeting, the Committee will consider the evidence and a written decision will be sent to the Headteacher and the complainant within 15 working days. With this report the complainant should be advised what to do if they are dissatisfied with the report's recommendations, ie they should contact the LA within 10 school days who will consider whether their complaint is one the LA feels it is appropriate to investigate.

Stage 4: Beyond the Governing Body

Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 1996 on the grounds that a Governing Body or LEA is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

Enforcement

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the regulator with responsibility for the equality duty. The Commission encourages public authorities to meet their equality obligations. It also monitors how public authorities, including schools, are implementing the equality duty. In addition it has a range of legal enforcement powers. It can, for example, issue compliance notices to schools that are not complying with the equality duty. These legal notices could compel a school to take action to remedy any breach of duty. As an alternative the Commission may negotiate a binding statutory agreement with the school. The Commission will usually only take formal enforcement action where attempts to encourage compliance have failed. In most cases the Commission would hope to resolve compliance issues through informal action and cooperation. The Commission will use the least intrusive regulatory tool to achieve compliance and will usually adopt an escalation process. In appropriate circumstances, however, formal enforcement action will be the most effective method of ensuring legal compliance with the equality duty or other provisions contained in the Equality Act 2010.

This PSED statement has been agreed by the Full Governing Body

Chair signature: *A Underwood*

Review and update: May 2023

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