



*Garden Fields JMI School*  
*Townsend Drive, St Albans*

## **Single Equality Scheme 2015 – 2018**

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| <b>Scheme agreed by Governors</b> | February 2015  |
| <b>Scheme due for review</b>      | February 2018  |
| <b>Head Teacher</b>               | Mr C Jukes<br>(February 2015 – December 2016)<br>Mr A Farrugia<br>(January 2017 onwards) |
| <b>Lead Person</b>                |  |

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# 1. Principles of Our Single Equality Scheme

## 1.1 Purpose of the SES

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all pupils, staff, and other members of the school community regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation.

The purpose of our Single Equality Scheme (SES) is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics', and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our policy, procedures and practices (PPPs).

We recognise within this Scheme the inequality linked to socio-economic factors and the benefit society derives from participation by all sections of the community in school life.

Our SES enables us to meet our duties under equality legislation, and to achieve the following:

- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination
- eliminate harassment and bullying
- advance equality of opportunity through our vision, priorities and PPPs
- foster good relations between groups within the community
- promote community cohesion
- narrow the attainment gap between children from different sections of society

The SES applies to how the school manages relations with children, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and others members of the wider school community. It does not apply to the interaction between pupils unless there is bullying, victimisation or harassment.

We aim to ensure that our actions are proportionate to the equality issues within our school and relevant to our PPPs. This means we prioritise those actions that enable us to tackle the most significant issues with regard to equality in order to deliver the best equality outcomes. In doing this we focus on PPPs that have the greatest effect, or potential effect on different stakeholders

Direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated. Reported incidents will be investigated promptly in line with our complaints and disciplinary procedures. Failure to comply with this SES may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases may lead to exclusion or dismissal.

## 1.2 Participation

Participation is about ensuring our decisions are based on information on or gained from representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take particular steps to ensure disabled children, parents and carers are involved as is their entitlement.

The school involves stakeholders including children, staff, parents/carers and other users of the school, as appropriate, in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated

materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for who English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country.

The views of stakeholders, trade unions and other equalities related groups are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

## **1.4 Anticipation**

Garden Fields recognises the factors which influence our SES will change over time. We think ahead about how our PPPs may affect different members of our school. This is embodied specifically in the process of impact assessment where we consider not only the impacts but also the potential impacts, whether positive or negative.

## **1.5 Application of this SES**

Our aim is to make this SES practical and come to life through the way we:

- remove visible barriers to equality
- remove barriers to learning
- act on behaviour that is unacceptable
- actively plan lessons to address issues of equality, inclusion and participation
- promote a range of activities that encourage participation for all
- celebrate events that reflect the diversity of the wider community
- build positive and strong relationships
- reflect diversity in our staff, volunteers, governing body and visitors/speakers
- embed SES into all our policies, procedures and practices
- respond to complaints
- provide education and training to our staff on equality issues
- act as an employer in respect of selection, performance management, training, promotion and rewards
- are trusted and act fairly

## **2. Our Vision, Priorities and Aims**

### **2.1 Vision**

Garden Fields School is a happy, inspiring and caring community which respects and values everyone – empowering lifelong learning.

### **2.2 Aims**

The school aims to:

- provide an environment where all children feel happy and confident and are challenged to make the most of their abilities
- develop individual personalities alongside respect and understanding of others
- provide a positive atmosphere where each child can be encouraged to develop their potential academically, physically, socially and emotionally
- have fun and experience new, enriching, challenging, technological and stimulating opportunities from the world around us
- develop and support creativity and problem solving skills through a variety of experiences

## 2.3 Priorities

The priorities for the SES are to:

- fulfil our legal obligations and duties
- develop outstanding learning environments which promote access to learning for all children
- have effective and consistent Special Educational Needs (SEN) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) support across all Key Stages
- embed effective communication for the whole school community

## 3. Protected Characteristics

Our SES consolidates our policies for ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation. This section extends our overarching provisions in respect of specific protected characteristics.

### 3.1 Ethnicity

Ethnicity embraces ethnicity, race, nationality and country of origin. We will:

- promote opportunity, tolerance, understanding and positive relations between groups
- celebrate common experiences and recognise unique experiences which foster respect
- promote positive images of all ethnic groups and counter misinformation and myths

### 3.2 Gender

We will provide equality of opportunity to male and female pupils, staff, volunteers and contractors.

Specifically we will protect the rights of pregnant women before, during and after their maternity.

### 3.3 Disability

We will:

- Reduce barriers to access to education, activities, employment, information and buildings by making reasonable adjustments
- Promote positive images of disability and challenge stereotypes
- Act in favour of disabled people so they can obtain more benefit from school life
- Enable disabled learners to fulfil their potential

### Accessibility

The multi-level site at Garden Fields can provide access problems for those with physical disabilities. Hertfordshire County Council guides: *“Pupils with a disability will be given the opportunity of access to the school of parental choice, unless **reasonable and necessary adjustments are not possible.**”* Financial responsibility for improvements to school premises lies with the school for works costing less than £500 [according to DfE guidance] and with the LEA if over £500. We will strive to make the school as accessible as possible to all pupils, staff, parents/carers and the wider community as is practical.

The Accessibility Strategy for Pupils with Disabilities Statement is an appendix to this Scheme.

### **3.4 Sexual Orientation**

We recognise the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Specifically we will tackle homophobia and stereotypes.

### **3.5 Age**

Equality on the basis of age only applies to adults and not pupils. We will:

- Promote the positive contribution to society of all generations
- Promote participation in school life for all ages
- Recognise the differing needs of generations and promote well-being

### **3.6 Beliefs**

Beliefs embrace beliefs, religion and faith. We recognise:

- different religions and beliefs have different needs
- differences in expectations of different religions and beliefs
- the requirement to have flexibility in regard of needs and expectations

## **4. Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Governing Body**

The governing body is accountable for and has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. On a day-to-day basis, the governing body delegates this responsibility to the Head Teacher.

### **4.2 Senior Leadership Team**

The Head Teacher and their Senior Leadership Team (SLT) promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- taking actions that address all protected characteristics
- providing appropriate training for staff, including legal definitions
- monitoring the outcomes and impact of policy, procedure and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions
- raise awareness within the whole school community
- sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and parents/carers, staff and other users of the school
- in the event of expectations not being met, take prompt action in line with procedures

### **4.3 All Members of the School Community**

All members of our school community (staff, contractors, volunteers, etc) contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- contributing to the SES implementation and review process

- raising issues with line managers which have an impact or potential impact on the school's PPPs
- maintaining an awareness of, and professional interest in, the school's current SES and the PPPs to which it relates
- implementing PPPs in accordance with agreed protocols and standards
- behaving with respect and fairness to all members of the school community

## **5. Information gathering**

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

### **Types of information gathered**

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination may include the following:

- Identification of children, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups
- children's views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum
- sports and activities choices of all groups
- exclusions data analysed by group
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage

## **6. Outcomes**

Of all the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. We record our outcomes using a wide range of criteria, both academic and experiential, for the various protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups, mindful of the principles of proportionality, relevance and potential impacts (whether positive or adverse).

## **7. Impact Assessment**

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed PPPs in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities

through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's PPPs are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

Every new PPP is drawn up with regard to the school's duties as described in this SES and is subject to the process of impact assessment in relation to potential positive or adverse impacts.

Our impact assessment procedure may include but is not limited to:

- ensuring sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision
- where appropriate undertaking relevant consultation
- ensuring each PPP has a clear statement of its aims and its content will deliver those outcomes
- understanding which groups will be benefit from the PPP and how benefits could be made more widely available
- eliminating unlawful discrimination
- understanding if there is a disproportionate positive or negative impact on a group
- understanding how additions to or removal from a PPP would impact different groups
- identify how to remove barriers to different groups
- understanding the implications for and method of implementation
- recording a decision

## **8. Action Plans**

Our action plans cover all relevant protected characteristics. These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

Our action plans are incorporated in the School Improvement Plan which ensures that they are checked, monitored and evaluated systematically.

## **9. Publication and reporting**

The Governing Body decides how best to publish the SES. The school provides a copy in a range of formats and actively makes it available to parents/carers and others, including those identified as difficult to engage. The school prospectus includes a reference to the SES and the values underpinning it.

The school reports annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the SES itself on school ethos and practice within the school in addition to the impact assessments done on the full range of PCPs.

## **10. Review**

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the SES on a regular basis, through the governing body and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

As part of the review of the SES, the school commits to:

- revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SES and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;
- using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SES informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans. This process continues to:

- involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;
- be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;
- use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.

## Appendix

Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St. Albans, Herts. AL3 5RL.



### **ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES STATEMENT**

***The definition of 'disability' under the Equality Act 2010:***

***In the Act, a person has a disability if:***

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

***For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:***

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

At Garden Fields all staff, teaching and non-teaching, are committed to providing the best possible education for each child within our care, irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability or disabilities. We ensure that each child has access to a number of areas of learning so that he/she is able to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for their self-fulfilment and development as active and responsible citizens. To that end we aim to be as inclusive as is practical to all.

Clearly, however, the multi-level site at Garden Fields can provide access problems for those with physical disabilities. The Hertfordshire County Council states: "*Pupils with a disability will be given the opportunity of access to the school of parental choice, unless **reasonable** and **necessary** adjustments are not possible.*" Financial responsibility for improvements to school premises lies with the school for works costing less than £500 [according to DfE guidance] and with the LEA if over £500.

#### **Garden Fields' On-Going Strategy:**

- *Working closely with external agencies to benefit specific pupils*
- *Good communication amongst ALL staff e.g. class medical lists*
- *Constant review of practices e.g. storage of inhalers / epipens / communication system*
- *Continue practice of early identification of need through nursery visits and induction*
- *Monitor and review provision in classrooms, play areas and shared spaces around the school site*
- *Develop use of ICT to facilitate learning for children with specific learning difficulties*
- *Emergency First Aid Training for all staff – updated every 3 years*
- *Epipen and inhaler training for all staff – updated every 3 years*
- *Ensuring at least 2 staff are fully trained in Paediatric Care*

*This Statement agreed by Governors: February 2015*