

Equality Policy



This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Policy originator:	Tandridge Education Partnership/ 'Valuing All God's Children'
Committee responsible:	Governing Body
Date approved:	Spring 2023
Review period:	Annual
Next review date:	Spring 2024



We seek to be an outstanding school, building a 'Learning for Life' foundation, by nurturing and educating the whole child, whatever their faith or background.

We will prepare our children intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually for the future, enabling them to flourish with the confidence and self-belief to achieve their full potential

Our aim is for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

**Be healthy
Stay safe
Enjoy and achieve
Make a positive contribution
And achieve economic well-being**

School statement on equality

Every person in our school community has been made in the image of God and is loved unconditionally by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community. Each person, in all their unique difference, should be able to thrive, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, academic ability, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

We are committed to promoting the understanding of the principles and practices of equality – treating all members of our school community as individuals, according to their needs, with an awareness of our diverse society and appreciating the value of difference. We actively seek to challenge discrimination and we promote an anti-bullying stance which makes clear the unacceptability of racist, sexist, disablist and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language. We apply an emphasis on inclusive language, which acknowledges diversity in all its forms, conveying respect to all people, is sensitive to differences and promotes equitable opportunities.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, gender identity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. 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.

Rationale

At St Peter's School we have a positive approach to ensuring equality, as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Our Equality Policy applies to parents, staff, governors, pupils, visitors and those connected with the school in a wider sense. It covers sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, marital and civil partnerships and pupils or adults who are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

St Peter's is a fully inclusive infant school set in Tandridge, Surrey. We currently have 75 pupils on roll and 14 employees.

Equality of opportunity is a fundamental right for all members of the school community. We are committed to developing the potential of all people associated with the school.

Our school badge depicts the crossed keys; Jesus gave St Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven. We believe that at St Peter's School we are giving our pupils the key to learning, hence our mission statement 'Learning for Life'.

"For we know the plans we have for you...Plans for hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29

Through ongoing education and training the school promotes a culture of respect for all, we promote equality by recognising and celebrating diversity, and we create a school community that prepares our children for a life in a diverse and modern society where British values are promoted and celebrated.

Context of the school

St Peter's school is located in rural Surrey. The school serves the small villages of Tandridge and Crowhurst as well as larger areas of housing in the towns of Oxted, Hurst Green and Godstone. The pupils and staff come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds but levels of deprivation are low (FSM at 9.33%) Overall the school has a population of 48% girls to 52% boys at the present time, but this fluctuates year on year. Attainment at the end of Key stage 1 is high for most pupils. There are currently 9.33% of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (school support or EHCP). The vast majority of pupils are white British with a small number from other ethnic origins. There are no pupils for whom English is a second language. A small number of pupils speak more than one language.

Whilst the school is a cohesive community, we recognise the need to actively promote relationships between the various sections of society represented within the school and the wider community. The school is adapted to accommodate pupils with additional physical needs; all areas of the school building are wheelchair friendly.

Aims

We aim to embrace the diversity of the community we serve and as such celebrate all groups represented within it. We will eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and adapting to provide equitable outcomes through the promotion of good relationships, and positive attitudes between all people in the school community and beyond. We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning this will include the use of thoughtful, high quality and differentiated resources.

We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, parent helpers, visitors or contractors to St Peter's School. This policy covers all aspects of school life including pupil admissions, teaching and learning, behaviour management, staff recruitment and career development, parental involvement and the role of

the governing body. All members of the school community must be free from any form of discrimination or harassment.

We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve. We provide professional development in the areas of inclusivity, equality and diversity to staff and ensure they are empowered with the skills and information to address and support equality within the classroom setting.

We are aware that low self-image and ignorance can cause prejudice and stereotyping. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all. There is a large emphasis on this in the Relationships Education and Personal, Health and Social Education (PSHE) schemes of work but this is promoted through all curriculum areas.

Specific reference to groups covered within the Equality Act 2010:

Ethnic Diversity:

Recognising the small level of ethnic diversity within the local community, it is an aim of the school to reflect the cultural diversity of the wider community to promote awareness and understanding.

- It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any form of behaviour that discriminates on the basis of race, colour and culture. All incidents of a racially motivated nature will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate sanctions applied. All incidents will be recorded through the behaviour log. A central log of racially motivated incidents will be maintained by the Headteacher. Support, respect, sympathy and understanding are shown to the victim.
- Where there are reported incidents of this nature sanctions and support are applied.

Religion or belief:

- It is the right of pupils, staff, parents, governors and visiting community members not to be treated differently on grounds of their religion or belief.
- Pupils are encouraged through a comprehensive Religious Education programme to explore a range of religions and to encourage respect and acceptance of others who have differing religions or beliefs.

Sexual Orientation (including Transgender):

- St Peter's School operates an RSE/PSHE curriculum which supports pupils to address relationships in all forms.
- Staff are made aware of issues around homophobic bullying and given the skills to deal with it if it occurs within the classroom or around the school grounds.
- The incident reporting system incorporates a specific tick box for homophobic bullying and all incidents of this nature are taken seriously and dealt with by the Headteacher. The leadership team is able to identify through this system if homophobic bullying has taken place and react accordingly.
- The school ensures that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

Sex/Gender:

- As a fully inclusive mixed gender school, we ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment given to other students.

- The school operates a curriculum that allows all students to access lessons and every effort is made to combat gender stereotypes with regard to curriculum choices, personal choices and career opportunities.

Disability:

The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities regardless of their effect.

The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

- The school will not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled.
- The school will provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it is reasonable to do so and if the aid would alleviate substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to non-disabled pupils.
- At St Peter's School we will ensure that disabled pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life and will make the reasonable adjustments to support this.
- The school is committed to the equality of opportunity between disabled and able-bodied people.
- We will eliminate discrimination that is unlawful as well as any harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.

For additional information relating to Disability Discrimination Act under the Equality Act 2010, please see:

Schools Disability and Accessibility Plan Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

- Incidents are investigated and in appropriate circumstances, parents are informed by the senior member of staff if their child is either a perpetrator or victim.
- Where there are reported incidents of this nature appropriate sanctions and support are applied.

Age:

The Equality Act protects people from unfair treatment on the grounds of age. In terms of the school population, the Equality Act recognises that people aged below 16 can be treated differently and the Act is aimed at unfair treatment that is not justified by the policies of the school. This has particular application to staff employment policies.

There may be cases where a pupil's prime carers are teenagers, young adults, or grandparents, and that age equality can apply to norms and expectations that parents fit a standardised age group.

Pregnancy and maternity:

The Equality Act recognises that Pregnancy and Maternity is a Protected Characteristic. Every school is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of its treatment of pupils, families and staff.

It is important to ensure that all policies do not treat any person unfairly who is pregnant or who has recently given birth and that the person is not discriminated on those grounds.

Female members of staff are already covered under existing employment legislation.

Good Relations Policy:

This has now been incorporated into the Public Sector Equality Act as a Duty to Foster Good relations between people who share a Protected Characteristic and people who do not.

What is meant by good relations?

Good relations between people from different backgrounds exist when:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued
- Similar life opportunities are available to all
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in schools and our communities
- There is a coherent and robust policy on all types of bullying, along with specific measures to address bullying related to identity.

Schools and their communities

Good community relationships have to be owned by all organisations and community groups if it is to be effective. Schools belong to many different communities. Our school's communities include:

- the *school community* – our pupils, their families, school staff, school governors, users of the school's facilities
- the *local community* – our school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in the area
- the *UK community* – we are by definition part of this
- the *global community* – formed by EU and international links

What are the key issues for our school?

Ensure our community knows of the work of the school, views it positively and approaches to school for support are met.

What impact have we already had on community cohesion in our school?

Teaching, learning and curriculum

- Promoting shared values
- Building pupils' understanding of their own identity and the diversity around them
- Having high expectations of all pupils
- Skilling pupils to challenge prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping
- Collective Worship which emphasise both individuality and commonality
- Global citizenship within the curriculum
- Joint working with other local schools on collaborative challenges and projects

Equity and excellence

- Analysing assessment results to identify performance of different groups

- Tackling underperformance by any particular group
- Removing barriers to access to the school for all groups

Engagement with extended services

- Building positive relations with different community groups
- Building meaningful partnerships with the local authority, parents, local community groups and voluntary groups eg local fire brigade have delivered safety lessons.
- Enabling the pupil voice to be heard and enable change

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy, our equality objectives (Equality Scheme of work) and data are all available on our school website.

Procedures:

School Governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed

Every member of staff takes responsibility to:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect
- Constantly recognise the contributions made by every child within the school
- Ensure all incidents of a discriminatory nature are immediately challenged and recorded through the appropriate channels
- Log all racist incidents in accordance with the statutory guidance

The class teacher

- Ensures they are aware of the background of all children they teach and that students are treated equally and with respect. We do not under any circumstance negatively discriminate against any child.
- When planning activities teaching staff pay due regard to the racial and cultural sensitivities of the class. Teachers strive to incorporate inclusivity, equality and diversity in a positive way which challenges stereotypes and assumptions.

The role of the Headteacher

- To implement the School's Equality Policy
- Ensure staff are aware of the Policy contents
- Ensure all appointment panels give due regard to this Policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities and that all staff work in an environment that is free from harassment
- The Headteacher treats all acts of discrimination and unfair treatment seriously
- The Headteacher monitors all incidents of discriminatory nature

The role of parents/carers

- Parents/carers are expected to support the School's Equality Policy.

- Where a child has intentionally behaved in an unfair, unjust or discriminatory manner it is the expectation that the parents/carers will support the sanction applied
- The school works collaboratively with parents/carers so a strong and consistent message is delivered about appropriate and respectful behaviour

The role of the pupils/students

- Pupils are to abide by this policy, in school and when travelling to and from school.
- When witnessing an incident of discrimination, a pupil must report it.
- A child who is a victim must report it so that the school can deal with the matter swiftly and efficiently.

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Governor and the Headteacher.

Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of students
- Monitoring exclusions

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring, Reviewing & Assessing Impact

The governing body will receive annual reports for review; this will include reference to the school population, key initiatives and progress against targets and future plans.

Links to other policies and documentation

We ensure that the principles listed above apply to all of our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Admissions and attendance
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Bullying and addressing prejudice related bullying
- Care, guidance and support
- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- SMSC and PSHE
- Special educational needs
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians

- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are included in our Single Equality Scheme, School Development Plan, Self-evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.