

# **Kingsweston School**

## **Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan 2017-2020**



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## **Foreword**

This Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan brings together the school's approach for promoting equality and accessibility in our policies and procedures and, most importantly in our day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality and accessibility will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our learners, staff, governors and parents/carers in particular.

**Headteacher, Chair of Governors**

## **1 What is the Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan?**

Our Single Equality Policy and action plan (combined with the premises development plan) covers a three-year period from **2017 to 2020**. It integrates our duties in relation to race, disability, gender, accessibility and promoting community cohesion. The duties cover staff, pupils and people using the services of the school such as parents.

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan plus the school and premises development plans enable us to achieve a framework for action which covers all six equality strands plus accessibility requirements and ensures that we meet our responsibilities of the public sector duties in an inclusive way.

The characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 are:

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

(However in schools, age is only a protected characteristic in relation to employment and the provision of goods and services. Age as a protected characteristic does not apply to pupils (even those who are over 18).

## **2 Meeting our duties**

Under the statutory duties all schools have responsibilities to promote race, disability and gender equality.

### **Race equality**

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

### **Disability equality**

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people which means that we must have due regard to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. Eliminate disability related harassment
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. Take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favorably than other people.

## **Gender equality**

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. Promote equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

## **Accessibility**

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled pupils and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

1. Increase access to the curriculum
2. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access
3. Make written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways

We must ensure that disabled pupils do not receive less favourable treatment and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

## **Transgender**

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

## **British Values and community cohesion**

We have a responsibility to promote values which the government defines as British and which include, for the purposes of this policy, community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. We have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility action plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting our objectives.

## **Age, sexual orientation, religion and belief**

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This policy includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

### 3 Our school values and vision

In meeting the duties described above, this will mean that all our actions will embody our school's key principles and values with regards to Equalities.

- We strive to make the best possible provision for all pupils/students, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- We know that equalities are not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be/ are disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views, and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and try to involve them in policy review.
- We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in our school.

### 4 Our school

Kingsweston is a large and diverse special school which aims to provide high quality education for children with a wide range of learning disabilities – complex, severe learning difficulties and children with autism/Asperger's syndrome. (78% of pupils have an ASC as either a primary or secondary identified need).

As of September 2017 the school has a roll of 146 and operates across 4 sites. Our school population consists of:

- **21 % Girls - 79% Boys**
- **42% of our pupils receive the Pupil Premium**
- **43% of our pupils have an ethnic minority background**
- **24% of our pupils have English as an additional language**

The composition of our workforce, although diverse, does not reflect the composition of our pupil population and that of their families. We recognise the potential value of a closer match between pupil and staff ethnicities within our school community and we have an intent to utilise opportunities to enhance our current position.

The socio-economic backgrounds within the school are mainly white British. We currently have 8 Children who are Looked After by the Local Authority, 1 child with a Child Protection Plan and 35 identified as children in need. Some families are being supported by the Locality Team and others receive support from our Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Attendance rates at the school for both authorised and unauthorised absence are broadly in line with the national average and above that for special schools.

There are no specific characteristics or equality and diversity issues which face the school.

## **5 Collecting and analysing equality information for pupils at Kingsweston School**

Kingsweston is an inclusive school. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil his or her potential.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary.

Resources are available to support groups of pupils where analysis suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils/students:

### Information gathering (pupils)

- Attainment and progress data
- Attendance data
- Exclusions
- Attendance at Extended School activities/extra-curricular activities (e.g. school trips)
- Complaints of bullying or harassment
- Participation in Student Council
- Access issues
- Annual parental questionnaires
- Pupil voice questionnaires
- Racist/homophobic/disabilist incidents

We have identified the following **priorities** from this information-gathering exercise:

- We will continue to monitor and address any gender/pupil premium related gaps in achievement.
- We will respond to parent feedback and ensure our community plays an active part in developing and implementing our Anti-Bullying policy.
- We will continue to make significant improvements to the accessibility of the Napier Miles site.

These actions have been prioritised over the three year life span of our policy and have been included in our action plan, as shown in Section 16.

## **6 Collecting and analysing information for employment and governance at Kingsweston School**

Kingsweston School is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

Kingsweston School also aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of our local population.

We collect and analyse the following profile information for our staff and governors:

### Information Gathering (Staff and governors)

- Applicants for employment
- Staff promotion
- Governing body profile
- Attendance on staff training events
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Staff appraisals/performance management
- Exit interviews

We have identified the following issues from this information-gathering exercise:

- Low disclosure rates in respect of disability.
- Whilst there is a positive diversity amongst the staff group and applicants, this is not representative of our pupil population.
- Access issues at our Napier Miles site (although significantly diminished since our last plan).

Actions to address the issues identified have been prioritised over the three year life span of our policy and have been included in our action plan, as shown in Section 16.



## 7 What we have achieved so far

### **Race Equality**

#### **Dealing with racist incidents**

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We have and will continue to take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour using external agencies such as Stand Against racism Incidents (SARI).

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum and our commitment to British values, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We have and will continue to address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

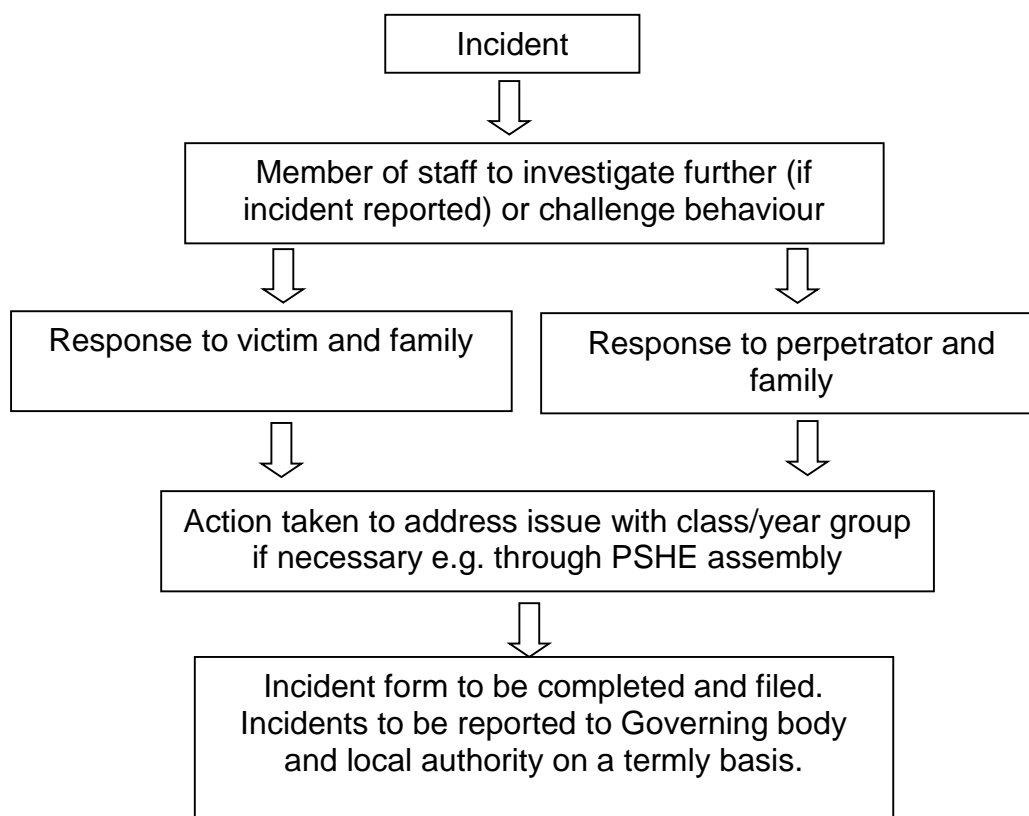
We record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

- The school complies with the Local Authorities procedures regarding the reporting of racist, homophobic and disabilist incidents.
- The school completes an analysis and reports the outcomes to Governors.
- The school is pleased to report that children from ethnic minorities within the school achieve as well as children from the ethnic majority.
- The school is successful in promoting good relations between people of different racial groups through the use of SEAL materials within the PSHCE curriculum and also through our Pupil friendly version of our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- The school complies with the Local Authority Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting new staff.

We want to do more by:

- Encouraging people from different ethnic backgrounds to apply for jobs at KWS, particularly those who reflect our pupil population
- The schools staff are supporting pupil education about such matters partly through working with parents and families where this is necessary
- The school is working towards improved engagement and consultation between school and parents as this would help to identify need and address equality-related issues at an earlier point.
- The school is supporting the work of our Ethnic Minority Support Worker to ensure that we provide appropriate support for parents and pupils from our diverse ethnic minority population.

## Responding to Racist Incidents



## Disability Equality

Our Accessibility Plan is based upon the following aspirations aimed at promoting equality of opportunity through environments which promote:

- a warm, bright, friendly and welcoming environment
- consideration of the health and safety of all who come into the school building
- storage of equipment so that it is accessible to all who reasonably need to use it
- adaptations designed to ensure equality of access for all to most parts of the school e.g. ramps, grab-rails, low door handles, toilets which will accommodate wheelchair users and those who need additional support/walking aids, good lighting, switches at an appropriate height, well-marked boundaries (e.g. door frames, doors, walls)
- play areas which are bright, pleasant & safe to use & which take account of individual need
- a belief that all children are entitled to receive a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Inclusion is viewed as an important part of our ethos and we value all children and their families, whatever their individual needs.
- teaching which takes account of our inclusion principles and every member of the school community is expected to promote and demonstrate inclusive behaviour. All staff are responsible for the implementation of these principles and are supported and have access to a range of advice and resources to support these.
- tracking of all children throughout the school to ensure that they are supported, planned for, and able to reach their full potential.

## **Community Cohesion**

What we have already achieved:

### **Promoting understanding of the school's context**

- Recognition that our pupils understanding of the world varies from those who know the space in which they occupy at a given time; those who recognise a range of familiar places that they visit regularly; and other pupils who understand the national and international context of their lives.
- Programmes of study which serve to set the school in a local and international context.

### **Contrasting the school with the local community**

- Students investigate the local area through community access sessions

### **Plans to promote community cohesion**

- Contrasting religions through curriculum planning.
- Support of international charities such as, Comic Relief and Children in Need.
- A Work Experience programme.
- Links with other settings including schools (regionally) and the City of Bristol College.

## **Gender Equality**

What we have already achieved and will continue to do:

- The school complies with the LA Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting new staff
- The school benefits from having staff of both genders.

## **Accessibility**

Very significant developments have already been undertaken at the Napier Miles and Shirehampton sites which have enhanced accessibility. The further development of the Napier Miles site will continue to have accessibility as a key reference point. The rationale for our priorities is referenced within this Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan whilst the actions relating to the physical enhancement of the building infrastructure is referenced within the premises development plan. It will be implemented by our Estates and Facilities Manager and reviewed by our Senior Leadership team and governors with the intention of ensuring that students are not disadvantaged in accessing the school and its curriculum.

## **8 Equalities monitoring**

We will continuously monitor our policy and practice with regards to all aspects of equality: race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We will look for ways to improve practice as well as ways to eliminate discrimination and harassment. We will build the monitoring process into all new policy development and decision making activities.

## 9 Other School Policies

We have used our existing school policies to inform our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan.

- School development plan
- Premises Development Plan
- Kingsweston Equalities Statement

## 10 Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body will

- monitor the policy and plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, learners and parents
- ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation
- monitor achievement of equality targets
- reference the accessibility priorities embedded within the Accessibility and Premises Development Plans
- check that implementation of the policy and action plan achieves improved outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

The Equalities lead will

- provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- provide reports for governors on progress and outcomes
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this policy

The senior leadership team will

- ensure staff, pupils, parents/carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this policy
- monitor to ensure effective implementation of the policy and action plans
- drive forward implementation of the policy and action plans
- support staff to carry out their role in implementing this policy
- provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimization

## All staff will

- highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities
- comply with the requirements of the Prevent duty
- challenge any pupils, staff or parents who express opinions contrary to British values which are manifest in school as follows:

### 1. Democracy

- a) The school and curriculum provides pupils with a broad general knowledge of, and promote respect for, public institutions and services
- b) We teach pupils how they can influence decision-making through the democratic process. Through Citizenship pupils are taught about the advantages and disadvantages of democracy and how it works in Britain.
- c) Pupils are encouraged to become involved in decision-making processes and the school ensures that they are listened to in school e.g. school council, pupil voice etc.
- d) Through the School Council and other planned opportunities the pupils learn how to express, argue and defend points of view.
- f) Pupils are taught how public services operate and how they are held to account.
- g) The school curriculum and ethos also teaches pupils how we can peacefully challenge perceived injustice.

### 2. Rule of law

As a school we ensure that the school rules and expectations are clear and fair. The school's ethos and curriculum play a significant role in helping the pupils:-

- a) To distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law and the basis on which it is made.
- b) To understand that living under the rule of law protects individuals.
- c) Through police visits to school via both assemblies and curriculum activities.
- d) Through pupils being taught about both civil and criminal law; in addition, we look at how this may differ from some religious laws.

### 3. Individual liberty – Through the school ethos and curriculum we:-

- a) Support pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- b) Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour, as well as knowing their rights.
- c) Model freedom of speech through pupil participation, while ensuring protection of vulnerable pupils and promoting critical analysis of evidence.
- d) Challenge stereotypes.
- e) Implement a strong anti-bullying culture.

4. Respect and tolerance – Through the school ethos and curriculum we:-
- a) Promote respect for individual difference.
  - b) Help pupils to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, their own and other cultures and ways of life.
  - c) Challenge prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
  - d) Organise visits to places of worship
  - e) Develop links with faith communities
  - f) Develop critical personal thinking skills
  - g) Discuss differences between people, such as differences of faith, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and differences of family situations, such as looked-after children or young carers

All staff will also ensure that students are encouraged to recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to:

- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

### **11 Commissioning and Procurement**

Kingsweston School is required by law to make sure that when we buy services from another organisation to help us provide our services, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process.

### **12 Publicising our scheme**

We recognise that our policy is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our policy by:

- Placing it on the school website along with the premises development plan
- Communicating it through parent newsletters
- Staff and pupil induction

### **13 Annual Review of Progress**

We will revise our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan every three years and the Action Plan will be reviewed annually.

We will continue to review the actions we have taken in the development of our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan which include:

- The results of our information gathering activities for race, disability and gender
- A summary of equality impact monitoring
- An update of the progress made against priorities
- Celebrating what we have achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion

#### **14 Ongoing evolution of our Scheme**

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing evolution of our Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Action Plan. This includes:

- Planned curricular opportunities and at School Council meetings to discuss equalities, diversity and accessibility issues
- Opportunities to discuss equalities, diversity and accessibility issues staff meetings
- Having staff willing to discuss equality and diversity matters during parent consultation meetings

## 15 - Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan 2017 – 2020

Issue identified for improvement	Options/Planned solutions	Contribution to Equalities/Accessibility	Timescale
All staff are aware of the Single Equality Scheme and have awareness of their responsibilities.	Raise awareness of Single Equality Scheme at induction and Staff Team meetings.	Enhanced awareness and engagement.	Ongoing
Pupils will be able to access a greater number of local opportunities and services independently or with minimal support.	Targeted additional support for pupils who have the potential to accessing such opportunities with a view to enhanced independence (especially in anticipation of transition points).	Enhanced outcomes for all and especially the most able. Enhanced bespoke curriculum offer.	Ongoing
Policies will continue to be adjusted as necessary to ensure people with disabilities are not discriminated against	All policy development activities will include adjustments necessary to ensure people with disabilities are not discriminated against	The influence of policy development upon practice will be one which supports and promotes the equalities and accessibility agenda.	Ongoing
Race equality, ethnic and cultural diversity are promoted and racism and discrimination are challenged through learning in all areas of the curriculum.	Incorporate overt reference to British values (in ways that are aligned to our values and context) in planning, display and into revisions to policies as relevant.	Enhanced awareness and engagement. Context for enhanced understanding and for challenging misunderstanding/stereotypes/discrimination.	September 2018
To enhance the accessibility of the Napier Miles building through the development of the Gym block (and step access to it.)	New facilities to include ramps rather than steps from the West Wing and an accessible bathroom.	Enhanced accessibility. Enhanced opportunities for inclusion as a result of the development of group teaching spaces. <b>Achieved</b>	September 2017
To develop the curriculum through the provision of a sensory integration facility at the Napier Miles site.	A well-equipped Sensory Integration support suite to be developed alongside a refurbished gym of a smaller size.	Redesign of the building to incorporate this facility enhances our provision, including more pupils whose needs we are better able to meet. <b>Achieved</b>	September 2017
To enhance the curriculum offer through the development of playground spaces at all sites with inclusive equipment tailored to meet priority pupil needs and interests.	Playground redesign through a combination of fixed and portable equipment designed with a well-informed understanding of pupil needs and interests.	Enhanced accessibility and engagement. Age and need/interest appropriate equipment to be available. <b>Phase 1 achieved (All playgrounds). Phase 2 (NM middle playground) due by term 3 2018.</b>	January 2018

Note: The school and premises development plans should be read in conjunction with this policy/plan.