Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Equality Policy 2023-2026

Implemented	September 2023
Review Cycle	Three Years
Review Date	Academic Year 2026

DCAT
DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER ACADEMY TRUST

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

Sedlescombe Vision and Values

Motto:

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

Values:

Aspiration	**Honesty**	**Forgiveness**
Courage	**Thankfulness**	**Kindness**

Vision:

Our school is a family with God at its heart.
Christian values guide and inform all that we do.

We aim to:

- **Provide a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment where everyone is able to learn and grow as a unique individual.**
- **Encourage and support each other to be ambitious, resilient and independent lifelong learners.**
- **Develop enquiring minds and a love of learning.**
- **Value everyone and celebrate their beliefs, achievements, skills and contributions.**
- **Provide a curriculum that is creative, exciting, challenging and takes learning beyond the classroom.**
- **Reach the highest standards in achievement and attainment.**
- **Create a learning community where everyone is nurtured and challenged to develop academically, personally, morally and spiritually.**
- **Support each other to develop the skills, attitudes and values to grow into responsible members of our global community and God's world.**

Equality Policy

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Defining Equality and Diversity

Equality is about fairness and equality of opportunity; advancing equality of opportunity involves treating people differently. People should not be treated the same. Some people may need extra help or adjustments to be part of the school community; this includes teachers, administration, cleaning or catering staff employed at the school as well as pupils, parents/guardians and school governors.

Diversity is about valuing people as individuals and learning from our differences. Our differences can be visible and non-visible. By promoting diversity, we can meet different needs creatively to ensure opportunities are available to all and potential is fulfilled. We can meet our school's aims and objectives more efficiently by promoting a diversity friendly school culture.

Culture is about the way we behave towards one another – school governors, all employees in the school, parents, pupils and the whole school community. It is about how we treat one another and respect our differences. Promoting diversity and a diversity-friendly culture helps to create a more productive school community.

The Equality Act 2010

Relating to the Equality Act, there are nine 'protected characteristics' these are:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Gender Reassignment
7. Disability
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Religion or Belief

In addition, we include economic disadvantage within this policy, recognising that this has one of the most significant impacts on the achievement of children and young people.

We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out 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.

Our School within the Wider Context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability, and social deprivation.

At Sedlescombe:

- Around 19% of children are currently known to be eligible for pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children or children of service families).

- 17% of children in the school currently have Special Educational Needs, 2% of children in school have an Education Health Care Plan

- 16% of children in the school currently are identified as EAL

Overall Aims of our Equality Policy

The aims of our Equality Policy at Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation

- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.

- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities, and ethnic origins.

Our Approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity, and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact and inform each other.
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK, and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere.

- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

Our Vision Statement for Equality

Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our Duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process to ensure better outcomes for all. We have due regard to the need to ensure that people with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately or negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

We are guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as recognising and accepting our duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (The Prevent Duty 2015, revised Sept 2023) and promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our school priorities:

- the engagement, participation, and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- break and lunch times
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities, and school trips
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy,
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy,
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy,
- Develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available,
- Monitor the policy and Equality objectives; report to the Governing Body at least annually,
- Have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy,
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy,
- With the Head Teacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues.

Our governing body will**:**

- Designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy,
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the Academy Development Plan,
- Support the head teacher in implementing any actions necessary,
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy,
- Evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 3 years.

Our pupils will be:

- Involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability,
- Expected to act in accordance with the policy,
- Encouraged to actively support the policy.

Our parents/carers will be:

- Given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the policy,
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements,
- Encouraged to actively support the policy,
- Encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy,
- Informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the policy,
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them,
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. 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 people who are 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. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination by recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Responding to Hate or Prejudice-Based Incidents and Bullying

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 will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with differences 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, 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 will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying. We will 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.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be actively promoted and disseminated. Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

Equality Objectives

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff and community and analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed and published every 3 years. The Equality Objectives are published on our website in the Policies section.