

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

Status: statutory

Introduction

This single equality scheme (SES) integrates the general duties that apply to public bodies, including maintained schools and academies, and extends to all groups with protected characteristics; specifically in relation to race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

A person's age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment and services, but does not apply to students in schools.

The duties cover staff, students, governors and people using the services of the school. Schools might wish to make a general single equality statement and retain their individual schemes for race, disability and gender equality or include these within the single equality scheme.

The over-arching statement includes priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for all equality areas; those groups with protected characteristics.

The Equality Act 2010 brought a statutory requirement for public bodies, including schools, to have a single equality scheme which consolidated equality legislation. It also had the effect of replacing all previously existing legislation, eg the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act.

It is a further requirement to review the single equality scheme and any associated action plan annually and this will be through the governing body and will cover activity undertaken in relation to the three original equality schemes and the other equality strands.

The DFE has published non-statutory advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (LAs) to assist them in understanding how the Equality Act 2010 affects them and how to fulfil their duties. Further details can be found at the following address:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools.

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Statement

Elthorne Park High School is a multi-cultural, multi-racial community of nearly 1700 people, both adults and students. We believe that everyone in the school is of equal value and should have equal opportunities in school, the community and in life.

Many people in our society are discriminated against and treated as if they are worth less than others because of their race, religion or language; because of their gender or sexuality; because of their class or because of a disability. This is not acceptable in our school.

People are individuals and therefore different. They have different needs and different contributions to make to the life of our school and of the community. The staff and governors for their part strive to give unconditional trust and ask of students that they endeavour to be honest and give respect to other people and their property. There may be times when the relationship between a member of staff and a student breaks down. In such cases, the school will give all the support it can to the student concerned and to her or his parents, even though redress to exclusion may be necessary.

Equal opportunities is not about treating everybody the same. It is about meeting people's individual needs and appreciating their individual strengths and gifts. We are all different and should all be equally valued. Everything that follows in this statement is to help everyone involved make Elthorne Park High School a real equal opportunities and inclusive school.

Aims

Our main aim is to offer an education appropriate to each individual student's needs, regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or religious beliefs.

We aim to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for all our students, and the opportunity to reach levels of attainment appropriate to their ability. We regard all our students as being of equal value and to ensure that the needs of all students are identified and met, and that they are able to achieve their full potential, helping to raise standards across the school.

We aim to ensure that active encouragement is given to all students in order to enable them to develop fully talents and personal skills for co-operative interaction and academic excellence. No one person has the right to deny another person his or her educational opportunity.

We aim to ensure that everyone at the school, (staff, students, parents, carers, contractors and visitors) is afforded the basic rights of freedom and access to opportunity, including freedom from all forms of harassment or bullying.

Where contractors are working on-site, measures will be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that their employees operate according to the school's equal opportunities policies.

We aim to challenge in a positive way any form of prejudice, racism or sexism, whether overt or covert, which contradicts the school's single equality scheme. This means adopting a consistent and unambiguous stand, from which we strive to overcome prejudice and ensure equality of opportunity for all, thus protecting the rights and liberties of every individual.

We aim to create and retain a workforce that is valued for its diverse contributions and represents different perspectives, ethnic backgrounds, experience and skills. To achieve this, the school will maintain strong community/parental links and governors will give support to the school and all its stakeholders, to ensure an effective educational delivery.

Guidelines

Any provisions related to equal opportunities and racial equality must set out clearly its aims and objectives:

- Human dignity (students develop a sense of worth of self and others, irrespective of social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic or faith background).
- Justice and fairness (students value genuinely democratic processes and principles and are willing to take action on this).
- Commitment to equality (students recognise the principle of equality as the underpinning of relationships between individuals, groups and societies).
- Appreciation of diversity (students develop an open-minded approach to other cultures and social groups and are willing to learn from them).

From this, the following key guidelines emerge:

- All students should be encouraged to value their own cultural heritage and the culture and lifestyles of others, and to show respect for self and others while at the same time finding common ground to talk to one another and value living together in a community.
- Every member of staff needs to accept responsibility for establishing a reasonable climate for debate and extending opportunities for controversial discussion. They must address widely held misconceptions to avoid the risk of students with limited experience arriving at consensus views of doubtful validity.
- The provision of genuine equality of opportunity must be inherent in the education the school offers. The curriculum opportunities must be open to all and post-16 provision must give access for both sexes to all subjects. The school must challenge any gender stereotyping, which leads to constraints on the development of students' abilities and aspirations and should include the opportunity to study multicultural issues as an intrinsic part of all programmes and teaching.
- The school should clearly demonstrate the unacceptability of attitudes, incidents, taunts or remarks that give offence, intimidate, devalue another's view or opinion, or undermine another's self-esteem.

More specifically, this means the following codes of practice for Governors and staff, students, parents/carers and visitors and contract staff.

Governors and staff

Staff will treat each other and all students with respect.

Staff will examine the ideas and images in books and other resources and will challenge negative images and give all students positive images.

Policies on displays, notices, meals, uniform, etc in the school will reflect its multi-racial population.

Attendance at in-service training courses on equal opportunities will be encouraged. Staff will make every effort to understand the origins and nature of racism, disability, sexism and other forms of prejudice to recognise their own prejudice where it exists.

The school values the fact that many students are bilingual and will encourage the teaching and/or use of community languages.

Positive links will be developed with the homes of students and communities from which our students come.

Preventing and dealing with discriminatory behaviour, abuse, bullying and intimidation is the responsibility of us all. The school will support victims of such incidents, on or off the premises.

Appointment and promotion of staff will be made and monitored in accordance with the school's equal opportunities policy for staff selection, appointment and promotion. The Governing Body will monitor the balance at all levels of gender and ethnicity as well as membership of the governing body.

Students

All students are valued for themselves and can expect to have their culture and language treated positively and with respect.

Students will be given the opportunity in the classroom to discuss and to identify and understand racism, sexism, disability and other forms of prejudice.

Students will be able to contribute to the development of equal opportunities and other school policies through the year and school councils.

If students feel they have been abused racially or bullied they should report the matter immediately to their teacher/pastoral co-ordinator/deputy/assistant headteacher (as appropriate). All students can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated. If a student feels their complaint has not been properly dealt with they may take the matter to the headteacher.

Students who have suffered racist or sexist behaviour, abuse, bullying or intimidation will be supported by the school and in particular by their teacher/tutor/year head (as appropriate). Anyone who has committed such offences will be dealt with appropriately – in the case of students this may include exclusion from the school.

All students should treat each other and staff with respect.

Parents/carers, visitors and contract staff

Parents/carers are very important to the school and in particular they have much to contribute to the single equality scheme; their views are welcome and valued at all times. We ask that all parents/carers fully support the school single equality scheme.

The school will discuss with parents/carers any incidents of racist, disability, sexist abuse or bullying and harassment incidents in which their children have been involved.

If parents/carers are aware of incidents of racism, sexism or bullying then they should contact their child's teacher/tutor/pastoral co-ordinator/senior member of staff (as appropriate).

Any visitors or contract staff visiting or working at the school who become aware of any incidents of racism, sexism, disability or other discrimination should report them to the headteacher or one of the senior staff. They should also abide by the code of conduct established by the school in relation to the single equality scheme.

Implementation

The school will issue a code of conduct pamphlet that incorporates the codes outlined above with details of contact personnel to whom to report incidents. This will be publicly displayed in the school.

Detailed procedures will be developed and published to make sure that everything in this policy statement happens.

The school will operate the policy in respect of all staff appointments and promotions and will monitor gender and ethnicity balance.

All subject teaching and pastoral programmes of study will take into account the objectives and guidelines of this policy.

Information will be collected about students' performance and progress in all areas of school activity, including racial groupings, to analyse trends that could have an adverse impact on students' attainment. This includes:

- Admissions and transfer procedures.
- Assessment, and subsequent groupings by ability/attainment levels.
- Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs).
- Student behaviour, discipline, punishment and reward.
- Exclusions (fixed term and permanent).
- Racism, racial harassment and bullying.
- Staff recruitment and career development.
- Membership of the governing body.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the community.
- Support, advice and guidance given by teachers/tutors/year leaders/ learning mentors/counsellors (as appropriate).

All contraventions of this policy will be treated as disciplinary matters.

Action planning

As and when new objectives are determined an action plan will be developed by the named member of the senior leadership team (SLT) and data will be reported to the governing body and recorded appropriately.

Objective	Action	Performance criteria	Monitoring/evidence collection/evaluation of impact
What is to be achieved and by when?	What needs to be done to reach the objective and by whom?	How will we know when we've got there?	What will be our evidence? By whom and when will the evidence be scrutinised?

			By whom, when and how will impact be evaluated?
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Evaluation (monitoring and assessment) and concluding notes

This policy is to be monitored by the designated personnel to ensure its effectiveness through the school's self-review processes.

Evidence will be sought to confirm that the policy is promoted effectively to all stakeholders, ensuring that staff, students and parents understand and meet their responsibilities.

The effectiveness of the policy will be confirmed by its impact upon the raising of all students' levels of attainment, together with an increased inclusive atmosphere for all stakeholders and towards particular goals such as maintaining the gender/disability/racial balance within the staffing establishment, including at senior level.

This policy statement will continue to be discussed with students, parents/carers, interested parties, staff and governors.

The revision of the policy will be ongoing, ensuring the involvement and commitment of the whole school community. The statement will be reviewed annually.

The single equality scheme should impact upon all the policies and procedures in the school and all other school policies and procedures will be assessed to ensure their compliance with this scheme.

Additional notes on disability equality

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 and place a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment and requiring that reasonable adjustments are made where needed.

Promoting disability equality

This school operates in ways to ensure each and every person at our school who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is treated without disadvantage. We will take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage.

Disability equality is at the forefront of our policy development and over time will ensure that equality for disabled children and adults is woven into the culture of our school in practical and demonstrated ways.

We will maintain information about all our school members who have a condition that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities.

We will embrace all disabilities including those due to:

- Cancer.
- Diabetes.
- Epilepsy.
- HIV.
- Multiple sclerosis.
- Hearing or sight impairments.
- Mobility difficulties.
- Mental health or learning difficulties.

Monitoring disability equality

The governing body will ensure that matters of confidentiality are dealt with appropriately. We will ensure parents/carers and members of staff understand which impairments and health conditions meet the definition of disability and why it is important that the school has information about disability and health conditions.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of our policies and practices, all staff members will be given the opportunity to raise personal issues throughout the school year.

The school will make sure students feel comfortable in school and confident to raise any issues or difficulties they have which may be as a result of an impairment or health condition.

When admitting new students to the school we will ensure information about disability is shared.

When appointing new staff, we will ensure that our arrangements for recruiting, developing and retaining disabled employees promote equal opportunities.

Action planning

The lead professional for DES will maintain records of the initial disability equality scheme and the subsequent annual action plans. A new disability equality scheme will be formulated every three years.

Involvement of parents, carers and students will be maintained throughout the school year.

The response of the governing body will be contained in the public minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Every effort will be made to use plain language in the action plans to secure maximum clarity and understanding:

Objective	Action	Performance criteria	Monitoring/evidence collection/evaluation of impact
What is to be achieved and by when?	What needs to be done to reach the objective and by whom?	How will we know when we've got there?	What will be our evidence? By whom and when will the evidence be scrutinised? By whom, when and how will impact be evaluated?

The original records should be retained and any ongoing development recorded appropriately, although not all of the attached appendices will be required.

Equality consultation record

Formulation of this guidance took place in ----- and involved the following:

Name	Staff member/student/parent/community member

Signed:

Lead professional for equality

Date presented to Governors:

Equality discussions adult record

Record of discussions with disabled staff member or other adult.

This record may be completed by the individual school member, or by the staff member conducting the discussion.

If issues of confidentiality arise, the record may be completed anonymously and coded for accountability purposes.

Name (or reference code):	
Date	Discussion

Date reported to Governors:

Equality student/young person discussion record

Record of discussions with disabled student or other young person.

This record may be completed by the individual school member, their parent or carer or by the staff member conducting the discussion.

If issues of confidentiality arise, the record may be completed anonymously and coded for accountability purposes.

Name (or reference code):	
Date	Discussion

Date reported to Governors:

Equality action plans

Objective What is to be achieved and by when?	Action What needs to be done to reach the objective and by whom?	Performance criteria How will we know when we've got there?	Monitoring/evidence collection/evaluation of impact What will be our evidence? By whom and when will the evidence be scrutinised? By whom, when and how will impact be evaluated?

Date presented to Governors:

Additional notes on promoting race equality

This section of the plan reflects the general duties of schools in respect of race equality. The race equality provisions of the Equality Act replaced but mainly replicated those detailed in the Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The general race equality duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an equality plan which includes our written policy for race equality.
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this plan, on students, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these students.
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such students, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Elthorne Park High School is a multi-cultural, multi-racial community of nearly 1700 people, both adults and students. We believe that everyone in the school is of equal value and should have equal opportunities in school and the community and in life.

All schools are required to include, in their single equality scheme, their provisions for promoting race equality and to assess all other policies and schemes to ensure compliance with the same.

With regard to the statutory code of practice on the duty to promote race equality, we aim to tackle racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations across all areas of school activity.

- To take direct action (including providing resources and mentoring/counselling support) to remove inequalities between racial groups in their levels of achievement and progress; and their experience of disciplinary measures (such as exclusions), admissions, or assessment. This will be reflected in individual development plans, with particular emphasis on action plans promoting social inclusion and raising the levels of attainment of all students.
- To foster self-esteem and respect for each person as an individual and to create a positive and inclusive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to respect diversity and difference, challenge and prevent racism and discrimination, and encourage good relations between people of different racial groups.
- To prepare students to be good citizens, living and working in a multi-ethnic society and to take up the responsibility of participation, and to treat all others as we would wish to be treated. The citizenship education programme and the agendas of year and school councils will play key roles in achieving this objective.
- To create and retain a workforce that is valued for its diverse contributions and represents different perspectives, ethnic backgrounds.

Where contractors are working on site, measures will be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that their employees operate according to the school's equal opportunities and racial equality policies and code of practice.

All of the provisions of the over-arching single equality scheme apply to the racial equality provisions.

Additional notes on gender equality

The duties

The Equality Act 2006 created the gender equality duty for all public sector bodies, including schools. The gender equality duty is in two sections: the 'general duty' and the 'specific duty'. This duty is now incorporated in the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The general duty

We will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.
- Promote equality of treatment between males and females.
- Protect the dignity and privacy of transgender persons.

The specific duty

The school will:

- Consult staff, students, parents and local community groups to help to determine our gender equality objectives.
- Gather and use information on how our school policies and practices affect gender equality, both in our workforce and in our educational functions.
- Produce a gender equality scheme, identifying our aims and proposing actions to achieve those aims.
- Set a three-year timetable of the stages by which we intend to implement those actions as far as is possible.
- Assess, monitor and review the impact and progress of the scheme.
- Review and revise the scheme every three years.

Gender equality guidance

The production of this gender equality guidance, within the single equality scheme, provides a framework for integrating gender equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how the school will seek to fulfil the specific duty.

- Both males and females will be involved in developing the guidance. In particular, a working group will be set up consisting of male and female representative members of staff, Governors and students to lead in carrying out the duty.
- The school will maintain a voice for all students, staff, parents and carers. Questionnaires to stakeholders will be used through the working group and, with the help of staff, discussion will be initiated with students to get feedback on whether the school is carrying out its duties in the context of gender equality and to ask for comments and suggestions.
- As a result of information gathered, the working group will draw up an action plan to address all issues and to say how progress will be monitored. They will use the school newsletter to keep parents, carers and the community aware of what is happening.

- The governing body proposes that, in addition to information gathered by the method outlined above, the following shall also form part of, or be implied in, the action plan.
- To encourage parents and carers of both genders to attend parents' evenings and to become involved in the school's learning environment.
- To seek to ensure that there is a fair gender balance on the governing body so far as is possible.
- To provide successful positive role models from both gender groups to support our work-related learning programme.
- To identify and seek to eliminate stereotypes in curriculum content. In particular, to challenge perceptions that certain subjects are appropriate mainly to boys. For example, science and technology are seen as 'male' subjects whereas English, languages, drama and food technology are traditionally 'female' subjects and should be studied by girls.
- Opportunities to participate in all types of sports and also in dance will be equally available to boys and girls.
- Programmes will target underperformance by certain groups of boys/girls.
- Sex education will include gender specific programmes to deliver sexual health education.
- Discrimination, bullying, harassment of all children, young people and adults will be dealt with according to our stated policies, regardless of gender.
- To ensure that the lettings policy does not have any unnecessary discriminatory elements. In particular to look at the safety and security provision for evening lettings.
- To seek to ensure that contractors employed by the school are made aware of gender issues related to staff and students. In particular, contractors must be trained to avoid gender stereotyping in their attitudes towards students.
- To ensure that our admissions and exclusions patterns operate fairly and are not biased towards one or other gender.
- To challenge sexist behaviour in whatever form it takes. We shall actively encourage boys and girls to respect each other as equals and make clear the unacceptable nature of gender related violence.
- The school must be seen to seek to employ, promote and train men and women equally at all levels and in all phases of education and childcare.
- We will not tolerate harassment of people based on their gender or transgender status.

Note: definition of 'gender'

'Gender' in this context refers to society's construction of a system which identifies what is masculine and feminine. Individuals incorporate this system to develop their gender identities. It is not directly to do with the biological differences between male and female.

Review

The opinions gathered by the working group may well result in some amendment of existing policies, and all new policies will be drawn up with gender equality in mind.

The same working group will reconvene to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme and progress made on a regular basis. This guidance will be reviewed annually as part of the single equality scheme review. After three years, a full self-evaluation of it will take place.

Original records should always be retained and any ongoing development recorded appropriately, although not all of the attached forms will necessarily be required.

Summary

The school involves interested parties at all stages of development and review of the various components of the single equality scheme.

Information is collected on race, disability and gender relating to staff, children and other interested parties and is used to inform policies, strategic planning and activities.

The school participates in a variety of events that promote understanding and appreciation of race, disability and gender issues.

The curriculum includes opportunities for students to understand issues relating to the key areas of race, disability and gender. Visual displays within the school reflect race, disability and gender issues appropriately.

All students are encouraged to participate fully in school life and every effort is made to ensure positive contribution from them.

In particular, student achievement is analysed by race, disability and gender and, where necessary, informs action planning.

General conduct is monitored by race, disability and gender, with particular attention being given to bullying and harassment issues, with any potentially motivated incidents being reported to the governing body on a termly basis.

The school participates in a variety of events that promote understanding and appreciation of race, disability and gender issues.

Every effort is made to ensure that the physical accessibility needs of students, staff and visitors to the school are met.

Open evenings are held in areas of the school most easily accessed by parents and carers.

The needs of parents, students and staff are considered in respect of publishing and sending out information.