

## **Accessibility and Equality Plan**

### **Purpose**

This policy reflects our belief in a cultural diversity that embraces individuals and promotes community spirit. It is in keeping with our vision that, through our curriculum, we will prepare our pupils for participation in our richly diverse society. We aim to create a warm, friendly, welcoming environment and to eliminate any form of discrimination and prejudice against children, parents, carers, staff, visitors and the wider community served by the school.

### **Vision and Values**

Reed First School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We aim to provide a safe environment which all members, adults and children, can feel happy and secure enough to develop both academically and socially.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles –

- All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- We recognize, respect and value difference. We welcome difference and strive to support individuals by removing any possible barriers they may have in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We feel that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our school.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities that are different from each other.
- We encourage a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community. We hope that our policies will encourage positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status.
- We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

- We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential. We strive to provide all children with as many life experiences as possible, hopefully having an impact on their future.
- We work to raise standards for all pupils, including the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.
- Society as a whole should benefit. We believe that the work we do in school has a great impact on the wider society, including our school and local community, by fostering greater social cohesion and reduce prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

### **School Context**

Reed First School is a small village school in the Royston Schools' Partnership taking pupils from Nursery to Year 4. The school has between 40 and 50 pupils, generally, including Nursery aged children from the age of 3 years old. These are split into three classes, each covering a key stage. In the Early Years class, Nursery pupils access 15 hours or 30 funded hours. Wrap around care is open to all, for a reasonable charge, from 8am until 5.15pm daily. All classrooms are accessible to wheelchair users with disabled toilet facilities. Two classrooms also have hoists and one has an electric, height-adjustable, changing bench. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from other cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Some children in our school speak another language at home and have parents for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high for the size of the school and is now broadly above average. Attendance is generally good and families continue to be supported to improve this.

### **Legal Background**

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

Our General Duty under the Equality Act 2010: The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) The specific duties require schools to:

- Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

- Set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:

- Age (for staff only)
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race
- Gender identity and reassignment
- Pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation

### **Disability**

At Reed First School we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

### **Community Cohesion**

Community Cohesion supports good practice in educating pupils/students about equality and diversity. It contributes to the school's efforts to provide a broad, balanced curriculum.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information**

The Board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, are responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

### **Commitment to implementation**

The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively:

- Every 12 months there will be a report on equality and diversity to the Governors meeting.

All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

### **Commitment to review**

The school equality scheme will be aligned with the school plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes.

### **Commitment to publish**

Information regarding accessibility and equality will be available on the school website and reviewed regularly.

### **Commitment to action**

#### **Governors will:**

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher for the communication and implementation of school policies
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils
- Congratulate examples of good practice from the school and among individual managers, staff and pupils
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties (and ensuring 'returns' to the local authority as required)

#### **The Headteacher will:**

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures - Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders
- Ensure that staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
- Hold staff accountable for effective policy implementation
- Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils
- Highlight good practice from staff and pupils
- Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

### **All staff teaching and non-teaching staff will:**

- Contribute to consultations and reviews
- Raise issues with line managers which could contribute to policy review and development
- Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures
- Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme
- Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. 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 a person who is 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.
- We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.
- We will provide regular training for staff to enable them to deal effectively with prejudice-related incidents.
- We will tackle discrimination and anti-bullying reporting and recording all forms of prejudice-related incidents for example racism, homophobia, and negative views of disabled people or sexism.

### **Engagement**

#### **Participation and involvement**

We welcome the participation and involvement of people from diverse backgrounds and of different abilities. When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions - parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations.

### **Using information**

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender. These, if they occur, are reported termly to the Governing board. The Headteacher will look for trends so that we are able to identify any discriminations.

## Our School's Equality Objectives

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timescale	Achievement
To raise the attendance of those in vulnerable groups (PPG, SEND)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To support parents to ensure their children are always in school</li> <li>-To provide support for parents who are struggling to ensure good attendance for their child</li> </ul>	-Parents and the school are working in partnership to improve attendance	Ongoing	Attendance data continues to improve and is in line with national expectations.
To develop plans to improve children's Speech and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To identify children with speech and language difficulties at an early age to ensure that their future learning is not impacted negatively</li> <li>-To refer children with difficulties to the Speech and Language Therapy Service</li> <li>-To ensure that any recommendations are carried out in school consistently and regularly</li> </ul>	Speech and language plans are effectively delivered by school staff.	July 2019 onwards	Children with speech and language needs make good progress throughout the school and any programmes delivered show impact.
To raise the aspirations, attainment and experiences for disadvantaged children	-All children are able to participate in school trips, including residential trips, and to gain life experiences through visiting	Children will have a wide range of experiences	July 2019 onwards	Children are inspired for the future

	<p>groups and individuals</p> <p>-All children are able to participate in extra-curricular activities and are able to be included in sporting and musical activities</p>			
<p>To ensure that all staff are able to meet the needs of children with extreme behavioural needs</p>	<p>-Provide staff with training so that they are confident and clear about how to deal with the needs of the individual</p> <p>-Ensure that any changes to advice or policy is distributed to all staff</p>	<p>Staff are confident and capable when dealing with behavioural needs and to de-escalate the situation quickly.</p>	<p>July 2018 onwards</p>	<p>At any time of day, the behavioural needs of any pupil are met consistently and with understanding.</p>

Last Review Date: July 2019

Review Date: September 2020