



EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Silverwood School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, working through pre-formal, semi-formal and formal curricula. It is inclusive of students who function at early/preverbal levels of language and communication, through to those who express themselves verbally and in writing. The policy is designed to be child-centred and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them

Approved by:	Standards Committee	Date: 20/01/2022
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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher
- The equality link governor is Mrs Jan Winfield. This governor will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every year, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues
- The headteacher will:
 - Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
 - Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- The designated member of staff for equality will:
 - Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
 - Meet with the equality link governor every year to raise and discuss any issues
 - Support the Executive Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

4. Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

6. Fostering good relations

Silverwood aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with a range of SEND
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

Silverwood keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

8. Equality objectives

Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have **at least one Equality Objective** that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years.

Objective number one: Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing

Academic attainment is important, but pupils also need to move on from this stage of their education feeling happy, self-confident with high levels of self-esteem. Silverwood School is committed to providing a nurturing environment to help develop the resilience of our pupils to cope with the ups and downs and stresses of everyday life. Silverwood School has decided that one of our new Equality Objectives will address pupil mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to preventing mental health difficulties that may begin in childhood but have a greater impact in adult life. We strive to create a 'mentally healthy' school in which children and staff can thrive by: developing programmes across the curriculum that support the foundations for good mental health and develop staff skills in supporting pupils who are mentally unwell or vulnerable.

Objective number two: cultural development and understanding

Silverwood School recognises the important role of cultural capital (film, theatre, art, museums, galleries) play in our society and in particular that not all pupils have equality of access to our diverse cultural heritage. Silverwood School will promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experiences both in and beyond the school.

References:

'Valuing All God's Children'

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1988293/valuing%20all%20god's%20children%20web%20final.pdf>

Stonewall

<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/education-resources>

Mermaids

<http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

It is now widely acknowledged that inequality linked to socio-economic factors (poverty) is one of the major issues affecting educational attainment in England today. This school is committed to tackling this aspect of disadvantage, and information about the measures being taken is published separately in a document called 'Pupil Premium Strategy'. This details how and why we spend our Pupil Premium and the impact of our work.

Silverwood recognises that socio-economic factors (poverty) are not the only issue affecting how pupils achieve in school, as gender, ethnicity, disability/SEND, sexual orientation and gender identity may all affect whether pupils fulfil their academic potential.

Silverwood is keen to highlight measures the school is taking to address inequality that cannot solely be linked to socio-economic factors (poverty). Below is an overview of our commitment to equality of opportunity, outlining the work that has been undertaken in the past, as well as the steps we are proposing to take in the years ahead.

Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have at least one Equality Objective that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years

Silverwood School recognises that attainment data is an important tool in promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils. Data helps identify which pupils may be vulnerable to underachieving. Nationally, including Wiltshire schools, the groups identified (from attainment data) as being vulnerable to underachievement are: White British pupils eligible for free school meals (both boys and girls); 'BME' (Black and minority ethnic) (both boys and girls); and, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils (both boys and girls).

Attainment

Gender

Gender monitoring is one of the tools used by the school. The Standards Committee regularly monitor and evaluate the school's performance against national and Wiltshire data.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity monitoring is one of the tools used by the school. The Standards Committee regularly monitor and evaluate the school's performance against national and Wiltshire data.

The school recognises that White British pupils eligible for free school meals are as an ethnic group most vulnerable to underachievement. The school has a Pupil Premium Strategy to address this issue. Our school recognises that groups of pupils may be vulnerable to underachievement for a number of complex reasons, and is able to put the following measures in place to raise attainment:

- ensures that all teaching staff are aware of the groups that have experienced historic underachievement
- ensures that all teachers have high expectations of all pupils, and individual pupils' progress and attainment is tracked, with a special focus on pupils who may be vulnerable to underachievement

- ensures that all staff are aware that different factors can combine to exacerbate educational disadvantage, e.g. gender, being summer born, being eligible for free school meals, being a young carer, etc.
- works closely with parents/carers to address any underachievement at an early stage, and is able to implement a wide variety of interventions.

English as an Additional Language

At Silverwood School we:

- recognise the challenges faced by pupils whose first language is not English and we work hard to build the capacity to meet their needs;
- make sure new arrivals from overseas who join school later than peers make accelerated progress and catch up

All staff understand that pupils with an additional language have an increased complexity in our setting therefore the SLT and specialist leaders work with teachers to plan and deliver specific programmes for individual or groups of children.

Disability/SEND (Special Educational Needs)

As a special school all students who attend are subject to an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and are designated as having a special educational need. Our school recognises that all children and young people are entitled to a fulfilling and appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. We proudly fulfil our statutory duties in a spirit of inclusiveness.

Our school has a comprehensive SEND Policy and Accessibility Policy. As a special school we designate all members of the governing body to have a responsibility for inclusion and recognition of the needs and uniqueness of all the pupils at the school.

As a special school we are committed to high quality teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils with SEND, and the progress made by pupils, is a function of the school, the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. School leaders and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching and curriculum provision.

The identification of SEND is built into the overall approach our school takes to monitor the progress and development of all pupils.

Our school's arrangements for assessing and identifying pupils' SEND needs as they change and develop is agreed and set out as part of the Wiltshire Local Offer. Our school publishes its arrangements as part of the information it makes available on Special Educational Needs.

Our school ensures that children, young people and parents/carers are actively involved in decision making throughout the approaches outlined above.

Our school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people. We make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. Our school understands that these duties are anticipatory and require thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent disadvantage. Our school also recognises our wider duty to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

Medical conditions

Our school recognises that the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils. As a special school children and young people with medical conditions have their provision planned, delivered and co-ordinated in conjunction with a healthcare plan.

Curriculum

Our school recognises that all pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Our school champions The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement which states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Our school uses appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty are identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. Such planning means that our pupils with are able to study the national curriculum or an appropriate pathway in a way that is relevant and beneficial to them. It is not the responsibility of the pupil to change to meet the demands of the curriculum; it is the responsibility of those writing the curriculum to ensure that it is flexible enough and adaptable enough to meet the needs of each pupil.

SEND: Behaviour, Social and Emotional Difficulties

There is an increasing understanding of the negative impact of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) on the educational attainment of pupils. The incorporation of mental health into the Equality Act 2010 has helped to highlight this important issue. Pupils at Silverwood School with (SEMH) difficulties and their teachers are well supported through the core approach and culture of the school and have access to a wide range of good practice interventions including:

- Access to an in-house Behaviour Support Team who work with teachers and TAs as well as individual pupils and groups of pupils
- The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant scheme used for time limited one-to-one or small group interventions
- Individualised positive reinforcement strategies)
- A school behaviour management system that supports pupils with behaviour related SEND to make good behaviour choices and build the skills and strategies to enable increased engagement and learning
- Ensuring any specific element of a pupil's education that may be affecting behaviour at school is identified, supported and addressed.

Silverwood school has decided that our new Equality Objective **will address pupil mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to preventing mental health difficulties that may begin in childhood but have a greater impact in adult life.**

Faith and Belief

Data is not collected for monitoring purposes on Religion and Belief, so there is no information available to compare the attainment of pupils who have/or do not have a religion or a belief.

Silverwood School recognises how important faith and belief can be as part of a young person's developing identity, whether this relates to a particular faith or belief, or whether this relates to wider belief systems, and moral ethics.

Silverwood School is committed to supporting all our children and young people as they develop a personal relationship with their particular set of values and beliefs, and to support, in the context of the Human Rights agenda, the role this plays in the moral and ethical choices they make in life.

Wiltshire LA Anti-bullying Guidance specifically states that Religious Bullying can be identified as 'a negative or unfriendly focusing on religious difference or how somebody expresses their faith'.

This school takes incidents of prejudice-related bullying seriously and is committed to working closely with parents/carers to create a school environment which is nurturing, friendly and supportive for all pupils. Our school has established a procedure for recording all incidents of prejudice-based bullying and this includes bullying relating to religion and belief.

Silverwood School ensures all pupils have the opportunity to gain knowledge of and respect for the different faiths in Britain as part of our role to prepare pupils for modern life in a diverse Britain. As part of a whole school activity, pupils have the opportunity to celebrate a number of different religious festivals and learn from religious representatives from various communities. Silverwood School recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern and promotes tolerance and respect.

Different Families

This is one of the fastest changing areas of society, and one that is being addressed by Silverwood School. Different families may include:

- families with adopted children
- families with foster children
- families headed by grandparents/uncles and aunts
- single-parent families
- children with more than one home
- step or blended families
- families with two mums/dads.

Celebrating different families is one of the ways Silverwood School recognises the differences and similarities between pupils. Same-sex couples are now legally able to adopt children and that this puts additional responsibility on schools to make sure that all families providing love and care for pupils to feel welcome as part of the school community. Same-sex couples welcomed as foster carers and adopters for Wiltshire Looked-After children and the numbers of families headed by same-sex couples will continue to rise.

Silverwood School works with pupils to address any use of discriminatory and bullying language that would create an unequal school environment. Silverwood School confidently tackles homophobic language (and other discriminatory language) and supports pupils to create a school environment that values diversity.

The organisation 'Stonewall' has a wide range of information, advice and resources and Silverwood utilises the information to ensure the school creates a positive and inclusive environment for all its pupils.

<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/education-resources>

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Silverwood School is aware of the support that we can access in relation to this equality issue, including Local Authority support, and support from the Mermaids charity (this charity supports families and schools where gender identity has been identified as a specific issue).

In addition, this school is aware of the changes we can make to avoid unnecessary gender distinctions. Such changes introduced by the school not only ensure a more equal environment should there be pupils who are uncertain about their gender identity but can give all pupils the opportunity to thrive as individuals; able to identify and celebrate their unique strengths and the contributions they will make to the community and wider society.

This school has flexibility within the school uniform, does not make any distinction between the sports that girls and boys can play, and does not divide pupils into groups solely based on their sex.

LGBT+ pupils are a group that may be vulnerable to bullying and unfair treatment. It is important our school creates a supportive environment to enable all our pupils to work out who they are and how they fit into society. As a school, we recognise that historic discrimination and unfairness means this may be more difficult for some pupils.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The Governing Body, Standards Committee will update the equality information we publish, at every year.

This document will be reviewed by the Governing Body, Standards Committee at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by the Governing Body, Standards Committee

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment
- Behaviour
- SEND Policy