



Single Equality Policy

Introduction

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 cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality 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 in particular. Throughout this Scheme, 'parents' can be taken to mean mothers, fathers, carers and other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our centre to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by

- 🍏 active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but also in its review and implementation
- 🍏 proactive leadership
- 🍏 prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
- 🍏 removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a

coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our Scheme includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years.

Appletree is a Lancashire County Council Maintained Nursery school and Children's Centre on the Marsh Estate with mixed social and economic family groups. The Nursery School is an 80 place setting, with numbers rising from around 60 up to 80 throughout the school year.

Appletree Nursery School provides free nursery education to children, of whom around 40% are from an area where deprivation is ranked between the top 5% - 25%. A typical intake includes around 14% of children at Early Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Very few children on the school role have English as an additional language or with a declared disability. The main religious group is Christian.

It is not always possible to speak to or support children and parents in their home language although every attempt is made to do so through the employment of Bi-lingual support assistants.

Appletree is a phase two, LDA children's centre and provides a core offer of services including adult education.

There are 805 children aged 0-5 in the centre reach area, of these 768, are registered with the centre.

Of those registered, 255 families are workless, including those who are in training, further education or are carers. The large majority of families in the centre's reach area are white British, with a very small minority, 10%, of families from other ethnicities

Children's skills on entry to early years foundation stage provision are generally well below those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and in their social development.

The key issue which faces the school is the challenge of narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged and the others.

Appletree is a modern building with easy access on one floor level with push button entry electric doors. The car park has a designated disabled space and there is a disabled toilet in the reception area. Baby and child changing facilities are available in both the Centre and Nursery School and there is a changing bed in the Nursery. Appletree has an attractive indoor and outdoor provision with free-flow access to indoors and outdoors for independent play. Resources and displays reflect equal opportunities and children experience celebrations of different cultures during the year.

Appletree nursery has a keyworker system with a key worker buddy to cover keyworker absence to ensure children and families are well supported. Parents tell us that the school and Centre have a very welcoming and friendly atmosphere and that staff are friendly and approachable.

All the staff strive to provide a welcoming environment so that families from disadvantaged backgrounds and targeted groups feel that they are respected and that they are listened to.

We have respect for all individuals using the Centre and believe that everyone should be supported to reach their full potential. We believe all children are entitled to high quality care and education, which takes account of their race and ethnicity, culture or ability, gender, age, beliefs, lifestyles and family make-up, medical status, refugee or asylum seeker status. We welcome diversity and see it as a valuable contribution to each individual's knowledge and understanding of the world we live in.

It is important to us that children develop high self-esteem and the ability to stand up for themselves and others in the face of prejudice and discrimination. We will develop strategies with both children and adults to support this and we will challenge all discriminatory comments and behaviour.

We aim to reflect on what we do and welcome contributions and ideas that will help us develop our equal opportunities practice. We will consider equal opportunities in every aspect of our work.

We request that all visitors to our school abide by this statement.

Mission Statement

Appletree Children's Centre provides a happy, secure and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment where everybody's ideas, experiences and individuality are valued. Together we will share the excitement of learning through exploring, communicating and meeting new challenges that are relevant and have interest to us.

We have a Single Equality Policy which will be updated on an annual basis. This replaces all previous policies with regard to equal opportunities. The policy was reviewed in July 2012 and is published on our website.

Gathering equality information

Information about the service users are collected on the SIMS data base for the nursery school and CMIS for the Children's Centre these are updated on a regular basis by administration staff. Staff information will be collected from job application forms and updated through annual staff consultations.

We collect information on:

-  Gender
-  Race
-  Disability

In relation to Pupils, we ensure that the information that we gather will be used to promote equality in relation to achievement.

In relation to Staff the information we collect ensures that we promote equality of opportunity, however the current composition of staff by disability, race and gender does not lead to any useful target setting for this group

Sources of this equality information

Information is stored on a secure server and uses SIMS for Pupil and Staff data and CMIS for the collection of Centre Data.

School: -

-  Application form
-  Children's Centre Application form
-  Postcode data
-  SIMS data base
-  LSI
-  Annual Parent Consultation
-  On entry consultations (Induction)
-  Annual Staff Consultation
-  Supervision Meetings
-  Performance Management Meetings
-  Team and Staff Meetings
-  Pupil Analysis Data

Children's Centre:-

-  Application form
-  CMIS
-  Postcode data
-  Family Files and contact forms
-  Group and Crèche Evaluation Forms
-  Annual Parent Consultation
-  Annual Staff Consultation
-  Supervision Meetings
-  Performance Management Meetings
-  Team and Staff Meetings
-  Staff profiles on SIMS data base – this will be updated on an annual basis

Our current system does not enable us to identify the relationship that adults at home have to the children. This information is only known if offered by the family during home visits or contact visits from outreach services.

Examples of recent achievement where the school used equality information to develop and/or change an aspect of school life or school activity?

-  We have used the information collected about disadvantaged families to target two year old funding and Best Start and improving learning.
-  Pupil progress data now includes a sub group for low socio- economic group to identify and address needs of these children within school.
-  FEYE 2 places are allocated to targeted families and from September 2012 those identified as eligible for free school meals.
-  We are implementing a training session to address gaps in staff knowledge with regard to multi-cultural Awareness
-  Gaps in staff knowledge are addressed by access to a range of CPD training programmes eg. Breastfeeding Awareness Course, Safeguarding for Children with Disabilities, Visual Impairment Awareness, Sign Language Training

Consultation at Appletree

There are a range of techniques to involve people in developing, changing and running all aspects of school life. They include:

-  Annual parents questionnaires (school)
-  Bi-annual service consultation welcome record
-  Satisfaction surveys (School and Children's Centre)
-  Parents views are sought through parent meetings
-  Parents Forum (Children's Centre)
-  Staff and Team meetings
-  Complaints, compliments, and comments
-  Staff Wellbeing scheme
-  Partnerships – Primary schools, Marsh Community Group, Children's Centres

All service users are consulted these included:

-  Governors
-  Specific consultation with Fathers' re- services offered

We value the ideas and viewpoints of all adults and children who are involved in The Centre and Nursery School.

Data collection and storage

Information is collected and collated and an evaluation report is used to ensure core offer and EYFS provision and services meet the needs of all families accessing provision. Information is used to ensure that services reflect the needs of the community and families who access the Nursery School and Children's Centre. Information is stored on a secure data base on a central server in compliance with legislation for data protection. Paper copies are stored in a secure locked cabinet in the office. Access to information is only to staff employed by Appletree Children's Centre and Nursery School. Some information is restricted to Head of Centre and Deputy Head of Centre and this is secured in The Centre Manager's Office and marked Highly Confidential. All staff adhere to safeguarding and confidentiality policies and procedures and hold current Enhanced CRB clearance.

What we do to ensure equality

-  Implementation of the Equality Policy
-  Anonymous nature of the staff and parent annual consultations
-  Professional Development in supervision meetings allow staff to express their views confidentially and identify their concerns and needs
-  Consultation of well-being
-  Regular parent meetings and consultations
-  Whistle blowing policy
-  Feedback from parents state that they feel fully involved in consultations about services
-  Staff induction and training ensure that staff is proactive and confident to deal with difficult situations and know where to access support from external and internal sources.
-  Pupil performance data shows that the achievements of targeted groups have been raised and that the gaps in PSED and Communication and Language are closing.
-  We provide appropriate support and differentiation in SEN and EAL
-  Monitor and plan to close the gap

- 🍎 Resources for parent information are provided in different formats
- 🍎 Charges are sensitively applied
- 🍎 Informal groups are open to all families
- 🍎 Actively encouraging all families to take part in parenting courses and activities
- 🍎 We supporting the county council's role as a corporate parent and have a designated staff member for children looked after
- 🍎 We provide supervised contact for looked after children and their families

Specific Equality Areas

This section of our scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality, and further action that we intend to take

Race Equality

What we have already achieved:

LANCASHIRE RACE EQUALITY MARK

- 🍎 The school complies with the County procedures regarding the reporting of racist incidents. The school is pleased to report that in the last three years there has been a nil return in respect of this.
- 🍎 Whilst the community within which the school sits is predominantly of one ethnic background, the school complies with the County Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting new staff.

Community Cohesion

What we have already achieved:

Promoting understanding of the school's context

- 🍎 Home visits for all children as they start school
- 🍎 Parent meetings

Plans to promote community cohesion

Celebrating other religions through curriculum planning such as Diwali, Eid and Chinese New Year

- 🍎 Support of international charities such as Children in Need.
- 🍎 Having respect for different viewpoints

Audit of our practice in order maintain and further improve our assessment against the community cohesion good practice guidance (LCC) identified the following improvement priorities:

- 🍏 Take actions to increase awareness throughout the school and centre community of diversity, inclusivity and equality. (named person / learning walks/ review environment, website and resources.
- 🍏 Develop appreciation and insight into people from different backgrounds through staff training and longer term) school linking.
- 🍏 Improve professional development and support through action planning following the National Well being programme audit.
- 🍏 Publish equalities objectives and review these regularly with governor and parent's forum.
- 🍏 Provide equalities training for governors and staff; involve governors in monitoring the single equalities policy; ensure staff understand their legal duties

Disability Equality

Our building, curriculum and family services are fully accessible; the accessibility plan includes an audit of and plans for ensuring that everything we provide is accessible.

Gender Equality

What we have already achieved:

- 🍏 The school is successfully closing the gap between the attainment of girls and boys as shown in end of Foundation Stage Assessments
- 🍏 The centre is very successful at ensuring that male parents and carers access services
- 🍏 The school complies with the County Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting new staff

Raising awareness

- 🍏 We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:
 - 🍏 placing it on our website
 - 🍏 making it available on request
 - 🍏 providing a summary in our prospectus, including our vision and key priorities
- 🍏 At the time of staff induction,, a copy of the scheme will be made available to all new staff

- 🍎 Where appropriate, other service providers will be provided with a summary of the scheme.

Monitoring and evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We will report annually on our progress and performance. Our annual report will be shared with Governors and our School Improvement Partner. A summary will be provided for parents and published in our prospectus and in the Summer Term Governors' newsletter.

Both will explain how the full report can be obtained. We will inform staff and learners of our progress.

The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Equality Action Plan and inform subsequent Single Equality Schemes.

Appendix A – the legal requirements in more detail

Equality Act 2010

The requirements of the Equality Act have been introduced incrementally since October 2010. In April 2011 the general public sector duty came into force and by April 2012 schools will have the specific duty to publish information and the specific duty to publish objectives.

The primary purpose of the legislation is to bring together existing equalities legislation. Primarily these are the Equal Pay Act of 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act of 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments of recent years protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. It also builds on the 2006 Equality Act which instigated the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The 2010 Act imposes equality duties in respect of each of the equality strands (now called protected characteristics).

The protected characteristics are:

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

Public authorities are also required to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

The Equality Act has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality. It brings all existing provisions broadly into line with one another and extends beyond race, gender and disability to now include the characteristics of age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. The Act also identifies other characteristics such as marital status, pregnancy, having caring responsibilities or maternity. The definition of equality is therefore wider than it has been before. Additionally, requirements that in the past have been seen as good practice are now legally enforceable. For example, the law now requires that as part of their procurement processes, public

bodies should prefer companies that it contracts with to have a positive record on equality matters.

There are also implications for the community cohesion agenda. The existing duty to promote good race relations has been replaced with a generic one to promote good relations. The Equality Act will require all public authorities to take the aspects of interaction, empowerment, personal security and attitudes to others into account. Community cohesion is in sympathy with most, if not all, of the requirements in the legislation and thus there should not be a radical departure in terms of delivery.

The duty to promote community cohesion

The Commission for Integration and Cohesion, set up by the Government in the wake of the London 2005 terrorist attacks, identified an integrated and cohesive community as one in which:

- 🍎 everyone knows their rights and responsibilities
- 🍎 people of different backgrounds have similar opportunities
- 🍎 there is trust in local institutions such as the local council, the police and the courts, to act fairly
- 🍎 everyone recognises the contribution of both new arrivals and those already settled, and are not threatened by change
- 🍎 there are positive relationships between people from different backgrounds, at work, at school and at college.

From September 2007, schools have a duty to promote community cohesion.

DCSF guidance states that

'By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which

- 🍎 there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities
- 🍎 the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- 🍎 similar life opportunities are available to all
- 🍎 strong positive relationships exist and to continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community

Community cohesion does not just apply to differences in faith or ethnicity, but includes any difference, for example in gender, disability or sexual orientation. However, the main focus of the duty is to promote good community relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non religious and socio-economic groups.

Unlike the promotional duties for race, disability and gender equality, there are no statutory requirements to produce a policy or scheme or action plan. Schools must decide the best approach to implement the duty effectively, for example through a policy, action plan or working party. However, embedding the school's response in a

Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan will make it easier for schools to monitor their progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty

Further information can be found in DCSF guidance;

'Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion' which may be downloaded from

http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion/Community_Cohesion_Guidance/

Schools are obliged to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This duty establishes, in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, that public authorities are required to pay 'due regard to the need to:

-  Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimization that are prohibited by the Equality Act; and
-  Advance equality of opportunity; and
-  Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are known as the three aims or arms of the '**general equality duty.**'

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

-  Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
-  Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
-  Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favorably than others.

The PSED is supported by specific duties.

The **specific duties** regulations require public bodies to:

-  Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
-  Prepare and publish equality objectives.

The purpose of the specific duties is to support compliance with the general duty to

have 'due regard'.

Schools have until 6 April 2012 to publish their initial information and first set of objectives. They will need to update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years.

The published information must include:

- 🍎 Information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share a relevant protected characteristic.
- and
- 🍎 Evidence of analysis that they have undertaken to establish whether their policies and practices have (or would) further the aims of the general equality duty.
 - 🍎 Details of the information that they considered in carrying out this analysis.
 - 🍎 Details of engagement that they undertook with people whom they consider to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general equality duty.

This document provides guidance on how schools may develop a Single Equalities policy that attempts to amalgamate all the equalities legislation into one single equality policy with a single equalities action plan. It is a starting point and needs to be tailored to meet the needs of your school and its community. It is important to stress that schools shouldn't simply *adopt* a policy, but rather should ensure true ownership of a document that will be unique to each school.

The Single Equalities policy is intended to replace/cover the following:

- 🍎 Race Equality Policy and Action Plan
- 🍎 Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan including Accessibility Plan (see appendix)
- 🍎 Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- 🍎 Equal Opportunities Policy including:
 - Sexual orientation
 - Age
 - Religion or belief
- 🍎 A strategy for promoting community relations

Action plan

- 🍎 Narrow the gap
- 🍎 Raising staff awareness of racial equality through joint training with Stoneygate Children's centre and working towards the Racial Equality Mark

- 🍎 Increasing consultation with service users through our Parent's Forum in order to audit and plan to ensure equality of opportunity for all

Equality Action Plan 2012-15

R	D	G	C	S	R	A	Priority	Actions to be taken	Lead responsibility	Timescale	Expected outcomes
			C	O	B						
R	D	G	C	S	R	A	To narrow the gap for boys and girls between the more/less disadvantaged groups	<p>Targeted groups for speech and language, early intervention programmes (Happy Talker, Wellcomm).</p> <p>Assessment procedures effectively used to identify gaps and raise standards based on individual needs</p> <p>Termly Parent Meetings across the centre</p>	AD, MU, FE,	Ongoing Reviewed termly	All children will achieve their full potential and the gap will become increasingly closer for targeted groups
R			C		R		Review our practice in order to maintain and improve against the standards required to maintain the Racial Equality mark	Joint staff training with Stoneygate Children's Centre with Jane Richmond consultant in multi-cultural Awareness	JM AD	December 2012	Staff awareness raised to ensure provision continues to reflect a multi-cultural and inclusive environment
R	D	G	C	S	R	A	We will raise awareness of the needs of individuals through the Parents Forum in audit and planning to ensure the equality of opportunity for all	<p>Half-termly Parent Forum consultations both with targeted groups and with open forums</p> <p>Annual parent questionnaires</p> <p>Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan will be publish on school website and be available for staff, parents and governors to read (if appropriate translated in home language)</p>	LM, JM, AD SW	Half- termly	Consultation with a representative cross section of the community will ensure that all groups have an equal say in services provided

R	D	G	C	S	R	A	We will increase awareness throughout the school and centre community of diversity, inclusivity and equality.	Named person will review the environment through learning walks Website will be reviewed and updated Audit and review of resources and books.	JM LM AD, SW	Half termly	Staff will use a greater and more focused range of resources and books Website will show the diversity of our school and centre community
R	D	G	CC		RB		We will increase our joint working with other schools (this will be a longer term development)	Further school links with Stoneygate to develop staff and governor to further develop appreciation and insight into people from different backgrounds (visiting other schools for observation of good practice, staff exchange) Further development of the Mini Me project	JM AD MU	December 2013	Greater understanding of different cultures and backgrounds
R	D	G	CC	SO	RB	A	Improve professional development and support through action planning following the National Well being programme audit.	All staff and governors will complete the National Wellbeing Programme Action plan will be drawn up to address individual support and CPD in areas outlined as areas for development	JM SW	Annually	Staff will achieve a high level of well-being and support to achieve this
R	D	G	CC	SO	RB	A	We will ensure that governors have access to equalities training for governors and staff;	Governors will be involved in monitoring the single equalities policy	JM	Annually	Governors and staff will be aware of their legal duties in terms of inclusion, diversity and equality

R= Race D= Disability G= Gender CC = Community Cohesion SO = Sexual Orientation RB = Religion or Belief A = Age