

Nonington CE Primary School

Single Equality Scheme

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1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and Aims

1.1 Characteristics of our school

Nonington and Goodnestone are church schools, and, as such, our motivation is based in the Christian values of Faith, Hope and Love.

Faith in the power of education to nurture our human, God-given, potential.

Hope that we can have a positive impact of the lives of those around us; that we can achieve our goals and learn from our mistakes.

Love for all people, whoever they are and whatever their needs; sharing and caring for everyone.

With this in mind, the Single Equality Scheme is directed towards the promotion and enhancement of the educational experiences of all children; giving all learners the maximum opportunity to achieve their goals; and to share our resources in a creative and imaginative way.

Nonington CE Primary School is a well below average sized school with above average proportions of pupils taking free school meals. The proportion of pupils identified with a special educational need at the school is well above average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups with average proportions of pupils whose first language is not English. The stability of the school population is well below average compared to other schools in England. The school has an above average proportions of girls. The school's deprivation indicator is above average.

1.2 School purpose and aims

Nonington is a church school, and, as such, our motivation is based in the Christian values of Faith, Hope and Love.

- Faith in the power of education to nurture our human, God-given, potential.
- Hope that we can have a positive impact of the lives of those around us; that we can achieve our goals and learn from our mistakes.
- Love for all people, whoever they are and whatever their needs; sharing and caring for everyone.

The Governing Body has the following key priorities:

- a. To take advantage of the flexible nature of a small school and ensure that children benefit from personalised learning programmes that result in all pupils making excellent progress relative to their starting point.
- b. To develop the Christian nature of the school in a way that is appropriate to its Church of England foundation and sensitive to the concerns of parents and the local community. This will include understanding and appreciating the cultures of other countries and beliefs and warmly welcoming families and pupils of all nationalities, races and creeds to the school.
- c. To provide a vibrant, challenging and enjoyable curriculum that gives children a wide range of stimulating learning experiences both within the classrooms and within “real” situations in different environments.
- d. To develop “Extended Schools” provision in close consultation with parents and the local community so that a wider range of children’s needs can be met outside the conventional school hours.
- e. To work closely with local individuals and organisations in order to find ways and means of sharing local facilities, expertise and resources in the best interests of the whole community.
- f. To work closely with the local education authority, the church diocese, the landlord and possible sponsors to agree an outline plan for a school building that will be fully “fit for purpose” in the 21st Century.

1.3 Setting our priorities

The priorities for the SES are set in the light of:

- data collection and needs analysis to inform policy and action planning;
- views expressed by stakeholders that have been involved in the development of the scheme;
- consultation held widely as well as representation through the working party;

Our priorities are:

- narrowing the attainment gap between members of groups covered by the SES and other pupils who are not members of those groups;
- improving access to information for all parents/carers and relevant stakeholders;

- enhancing the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents and carers;
- challenging stereotypes;
- tackling bullying of pupils based on gender, disability, sexuality or poverty;
- developing pupils PHSE skills so that they can manage relationships/friendships appropriately;
- employment and considering objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap or differences between groups;
- promoting positive attitudes to belief minorities;
- providing comprehensive information to parents at key transition points in school especially KS1 to KS2;
- ensuring that there are good opportunities for informal parent/teacher discussion on a daily basis;
- providing parents with timely and open information about their children's developing needs.

1.4 Aims

- We strive to make the best possible provisions for all pupils/students, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- We respect diversity. We know that treating people equally is not simply a matter of treating everyone the same. We believe the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.
- We know that equalities is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views, and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation..
- We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and try to involve them in policy review.
- We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in our school.

2. Principles of Our SES

2.1 Purpose of the SES

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all students, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their

ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation.

The purpose of our **Single Equality Scheme (SES)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics', and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our **provisions, criteria and practices (PCPs)**. We recognise within this Scheme the inequality linked to poverty and socio-economic factors.

Our SES enables us to meet the **duties** under equality legislation, and to achieve the following for all groups:

- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination;
- eliminate harassment and bullying (schools must keep accurate records of bullying and harassment related to equalities and report as required to the Local Authority);
- advance equality of opportunity through vision, strategy and practice;
- foster good relations.

Through our SES we make links to all our actions and commitments to:

- promote community cohesion;
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes between children and young people;
- improve outcomes as described within the Kent Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

2.2 A Relevant and Proportionate Approach

In promoting equality and complying with legislation we apply the principles of relevance and proportionality. We aim to ensure that our actions are **proportionate** to the equality issues within our school and **relevant** to our PCPs. This means we prioritise those actions that enable us to tackle the most significant issues with regard to equality in order to deliver the best equality outcomes. In doing this we focus on PCPs that have the greatest effect, or potential effect on different stakeholders.

We also apply proportionality in ensuring that our PCPs are **proportionate means of achieving legitimate aims**.

We do not assume that existing representation alone determines relevance, so we apply the principle of **anticipatory duty** (see 2.5 below) in helping us to identify what is relevant. We also anticipate that there will be 'hidden' disabilities and equality issues so we are thorough in identifying factors that lead, or have the potential to lead, to inequality such as mental health needs or being young carers.

We ask whether our PCPs affect different groups in different ways and try to implement them in ways that promote equality. This is achieved through systematic **monitoring of outcomes, impact assessment** and **action planning** incorporating the fullest possible **participation of stakeholders**.

2.3 Participation

Participation is based on information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take particular step to ensure disabled children and young people, parents and carers are involved as is their entitlement.

Our consultative groups and **working party** include representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve. They are responsive to the diversity in our school and organised in such a way as to promote direct participation.

The school involves **stakeholders** including children and young people, staff, parents/carers and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country. The views of stakeholders are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

2.4 Anticipation

We apply the principle of the '**Anticipatory Duty**' in all aspects of our SES which means that we think ahead about how our PCPs may affect different members of our school. This is embodied specifically in the process of risk assessment where we consider not only the impacts but also the potential impacts, whether positive or negative. This is particularly relevant for Nonington CE Primary School due to the inclusive nature and low numbers of children/adults represented in each of the vulnerable groups.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Body

The governing body has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the governing body discharges this responsibility through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

3.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community;
- referring to relevant and up-to-date documentation from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC);
- ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability;
- sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school;
- working with School Personnel Service to implement the relevant duties in employment functions;
- ensuring that action plans are undertaken for all protected characteristics;
- setting up the working party, with membership to include (where practicable):

- Executive Headteacher or Head of School
- Governor
- Parent/carer
- Staff representative
- Inclusion Leader
- pupil voice
- ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately;
- providing appropriate training for staff, Governors and other members of the school community;
- Monitor the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions;
- In the event of expectations not being met, ensuring action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved.

3.3 All Members of the School Community

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of our community (staff, contractors, volunteers, children and young people etc) contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- contributing to the SES implementation and review process
- raising issues with line managers which have an impact or potential impact on the school's PCPs;
- maintaining an awareness of, and professional interest in, the school's current SES and the PCPs to which it relates;
- implementing PCPs in accordance with agreed protocols and standards;
- behaving with respect and fairness to all members of the school community

4. The working party

Our working party is involved throughout the development of the SES. The Key Functions of the Working Party are:

- to ensure the involvement of the widest possible range of people representing the different protected characteristics;
- to arrange for the gathering of information relating to all protected characteristics;
- to consider arrangements for impact assessments;
- to report to the leadership team on outcomes of information gathering and impact assessment;

5. Information gathering

5.1 Purpose and process

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

5.2 Types of information gathered

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- children and young people views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of the extended school offer by group;
- exclusions data analysed by group;
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage;

6. Outcomes

Of all the information we collect, the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. We record our outcomes using a wide range of criteria, both academic and experiential, for the various protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups, mindful of the principles of proportionality, relevance and potential impacts (whether positive or adverse). A summary of our outcomes is presented annually to the Governing Body. Where a robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular group it triggers the equality impact assessment process.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed PCPs in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's PCPs are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

We undertake our impact assessment in a relevant, proportionate and systematic way. In addition to using the **Overview of Outcomes** as a focused starting point, impact assessments are incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of every statutory policy and are also undertaken according to other **established criteria** through a **screening process**. Screening PCPs helps us know how much each one promotes, or has the potential to promote equality, and whether or not a full equality impact assessment is necessary. Screening is not a substitute for full equality impact assessment but an aid to managing the impact assessment process. We are aware that many PCPs have the potential to affect different groups in different ways and this is factored into the screening process.

Every new PCP is drawn up with regard to the school's duties as described in this SES and the appendices, and is subject to the process of impact assessment in relation to potential positive or adverse impacts.

8. Action Plans

The actions that we are taking to fulfil both the general and specific duties are included in the School Development Plan. This covers all relevant protected characteristics. The actions contained in the School Development Plan are checked, monitored and evaluated systematically.

The School Development Plan shows:

- objectives and specific actions;
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);
- clear timescales;
- who has lead responsibility;
- resource implications;
- specified dates for impact assessment and review.

Our SES relates to a range of other policies and plans, and will be implemented through them and the procedures and practices that relate to them. These significantly include our Accessibility Plan and Safeguarding Policy.

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the SES on a regular basis, through the governing body and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

9. Publication and reporting

The SES is published on the school website. A hard copy is available from the school office. The school website includes a reference to the SES and the values underpinning it.

The school reports to the Governing Body on the progress made on the school's priorities, the developmental actions and the impact of the SES itself on school ethos

and practice within the school in addition to the impact assessments done on the full range of PCPs.

10. Review

As part of the review of the SES, the school commits to:

- revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SES and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;
- using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SES informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans.

This process continues to:

- involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;
- be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;
- use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.