

Seghill First School

Published equality information about the context of our school (2023)

Published objectives 2021-2025

This is the information (January 2023) which we have a duty to publish about our school and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics. It includes information about the work we do to promote equality and challenge discrimination.

The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity, and gender and by proficiency in English. This is available on request

The school is a small, semi-rural first school in the Seaton Valley Partnership in Northumberland. The school website outlines our ambitions for the children, our place in the national and local community and our vision for learning.

Children learn about their rights and the school's values, which are in development, about respect for one another and the wider communities to which they belong. We celebrate individuality and the unique talents and characteristics of each child. Our school promotes and teaches children to appreciate pluralistic British values.

None of our pupils currently speak English as an Additional Language, but we have been preparing and expecting to welcome asylum seeker or refugee children. There are very few pupils in school with an ethnicity other than white British, which makes our school population less culturally diverse than the county average (4.7%) and which contrasts with the national average in state funded primary schools (34.8%).

A considerable number of disadvantaged pupils means that we receive Pupil Premium funding and are required to report on the progress of these children as a discrete group to demonstrate the effect of the funding on diminishing the differences in outcomes for these pupils compared with their peers. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance using evidence-based approaches. The funding is also used to offer social and emotional support to children. We also subsidise access to some of our school visits, experiences, residentials, enrichment and extra-curricular activities. These include an enrichment promise which we make to all of our children; that between nursery and Year 4, they will, for example, take part in a play, a residential, visit a National Trust property, ride a bike, visit a theatre and a place of worship. We monitor the impact of this grant on the achievement of all cohorts of eligible FSM pupils.

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals have a significant priority for schools, despite financial disadvantage not being a protected characteristic in law. Over 50% of our pupil population is eligible for FSM, which places our school well above the national average for disadvantage. Some of our eligible pupils also have additional protected characteristics.

In teaching and learning, we represent, discuss and welcome family diversity and the positive aspects of individuality in families. We challenge any perception that family

diversity may be uncomfortable for some members of the community to accept; our priority is that every child feels safe and knows that we are committed to our legal duty to keep them safe from discrimination. We audit resources and displays, letters home and the language we use for bias and aim to develop the capacity of the entire workforce to embody the school's inclusive ethos based on values of responsibility and caring citizenship. This is reflected in our inclusive PSHE curriculum, where children learn about different families, respectful and safe relationships, and about appreciating and valuing differences. We frequently introduce a whole school text as a means of bringing a sense of belonging (Oliver Jeffers, or *The Invisible*), or discussing wider concepts of equality.

The school has safe spaces for changing and using toilet facilities. On the days they have PE, children come to school in PE kit for the entire day. It mitigates the experience of children having forgotten or not being supplied with the items they need.

We support our pupils to succeed and achieve their full potential, academically, physically, and socially in an atmosphere where they can grow and develop skills, values and attitudes that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Our school uniform expectation is flexible, and the guidance does not discriminate against any child based on sex, gender, race, disability, gender identity or belief.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational needs.

Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who are on the SEND register. The SEND local offer and SEND report are accessible from the school website.

The school is not an accessible building or site. It is over 90 years old, has an uneven outdoor play surface, 3 rooms that are up steep staircases and some challenges regarding access. There are wheelchair accessible toilets and wheelchair accessible routes around most of the classrooms on the ground floor. The main entrance can be used as an access point for children with physical disabilities.

We consult with children and families when setting objectives for achievable and measurable plans to make the school more accessible for children with disabilities. We are very conscious of the lived experiences of children with disabilities who attend the school and involve them wherever we can in finding solutions to the issues of accessibility that our site presents. Our plans to develop and improve accessibility are outlined in more detail in the school's accessibility plan. We also work to eliminate any barriers which are preventing children from accessing and enjoying extra-curricular opportunities and events, those with SEND or who are disadvantaged. We then work to find solutions. Each headteacher's report to governors includes the participation of these groups of children in extra-curricular clubs and groups. Every member of staff runs one group, and we audit the interests and aspirations of children to find out which activities and enrichment they would most like to have in school.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying and have had no racist incidents to record to the local authority in recent years. We can report racist incidents using the [online form](#). We celebrate and discuss the benefits of diversity in society, and welcome opportunities to achieve this.

All staff and governors completed required Prevent training and recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We are conscious of the vulnerability of people in the community to becoming involved in campaigns based on stigma or discrimination and welcome open discussion and debate with the children to dispel myths and misconceptions. We introduce this through regular discussion of current affairs and controversial topics covered on the BBC Newsround broadcasts and using Picture News to spark debate and awareness of issues and events in the wider context of modern Britain. The intention of this is to develop critical thinking, extend the children's understanding or broader contexts than life in the north east of England and build political and media literacy. We recognise that some of our pupils may have limited opportunities to experience the wider UK and urban contexts outside Northumberland, so we prioritise a programme of learning including planned visits, journeys, residentials and visitors to broaden understanding of the plural, multicultural, multi-faith context of modern Britain. The residential to Duke's House Wood builds independence and resilience, visits to Hexham Book Festival introduce the children to diverse role models who write the books they read to extend their awareness of the issues and complex dilemmas they may encounter. The accompanied cycle rides with Cycle Generation teach about sustainable and healthy transport alternatives. The school models sustainability and awareness of some inequalities by providing breakfasts, sending home surplus food from lunches and events with children, offering unlimited drinks at events such as World Book Day.

The school records data about religion and belief when it is provided by parents through our data collection mechanism. This enables us to state with confidence that we are inclusive and sensitive regarding pupils' religions and beliefs. This is helpful in ensuring that dietary requirements, worship or teaching about relationships are sensitive to faith and belief or non-belief.

Documentation and record-keeping

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy published to the web site. The school aims to extend children's understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the work we do on promoting friendship, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults. The ethos of the school supports and underpins our commitment to the values of democracy, tolerance and mutual respect.

Responsibilities

All members of staff have responsibility for equalities and for meeting equality objectives. All staff take responsibility for anti-discriminatory work in school.

Staffing

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of all staff.

Behaviour and safety

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents. The school annually receives a report on the number of racist incidents reported to the Local Authority, which governors receive and discuss in the autumn term.

The school's anti-bullying policy is available from the web site and children in school take on the role of ambassadors.

Curriculum

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to acceptance, mutual respect and making an active contribution to community cohesion. The school ensures that children learn in an age-appropriate way to value and access their rights and safeguard those of other children.

There are activities across the curriculum, including PSHE and assemblies to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to help them to apply strong community values and develop the concept of global citizenship.

Consultation and involvement

The school has procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school and has regard for these in respect of the Equality Act.

We consult parents and carers through surveys and contact them via email, the school Facebook page and the school website. We are able to respond quickly to any concern about perceived inequality, unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Part Two: Objectives

Schools and other public sector organisations subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Objective 1:

Fostering Good Relations

Action: Learning about and experiencing life in modern Britain.

The main equalities challenge we recognise and work to address is the lack of opportunity many pupils have to learn about living harmoniously in a community alongside people who are different from us. Children in Seghill are respectful and kind, but do not have many opportunities to demonstrate that they understand what it means to live in and enjoy the cultural and spiritual contexts of pluralistic, modern Britain. We recognise the significant role that the school is expected to play in extending the children's perspectives to appreciate the wider context of the UK beyond rural Northumberland. Within that there is a need to teach about protected characteristics, who is more vulnerable to stigma and inequality, and the role we can play as active bystanders and upstanders. In setting this objective, we hope to prepare children well for transitions and for adult life with an appreciation of the institutions, systems and protections that are there to support a diverse and rich society.

Through the curriculum, PSHE, debate, discussions and assemblies we will continue to extend the range of opportunities the children have to engage with themes such as family diversity, disability equality, anti-discriminatory language and behaviour, tolerance and mutual respect, the role of the bystander, religion and belief, how democracy affects us and global and national political and environmental campaigns.

Children experience visits to places of worship in culturally diverse, religiously plural contexts in the north, when we visit a local synagogue and mosque.

Objective 2:

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Action: The post-Covid context and a curriculum for life.

For many of our pupils the Covid school closures and the expectations that parental involvement in home learning would successfully support their progress led to lost learning, decreased resilience and an absence of the relational, emotionally supportive aspects of life at school with peers. We are working hard to restore and accelerate the relational aspects of learning which were lost.

The statutory changes to PSHE, and specifically RSHE from September 2020 gave us the opportunity to review and consult with parents and pupils (in Autumn 2020) about the importance of learning about safe relationships (relationships education), looking after our bodies and health (health education) and family diversity (relationships education). This curriculum remains responsive to the needs of all children we teach, with a focus on physical, emotional and mental health, gender equality, power imbalances and consent. We will continue to build and revise this curriculum to ensure that it provides our pupils with ‘a curriculum for life’

The focus on emotional wellbeing and building resilience and confidence remains a priority for the school, being alert to and offering early interventions to support families with concerns about emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Oliver Jeffers’ whole school texts raise the profile and importance of speaking about and nurturing respectful, rewarding relationships. We will work with partners such as Commando Joe’s and NUFC Foundation to introduce and learn from positive role models who embody male role models who are sometimes absent from the lives of our children, and who teach about resilience.

We continue to promote emotional health through a lead practitioner.

Expected evidence of impact:

Awareness of equality and social justice articulated by staff and pupils
 Resilience and an awareness of how best to support one’s own emotional and physical wellbeing, even during challenging times articulated by children.
 Willingness to challenge discriminatory thoughts and practices and to recognise and challenge stereotypes and misconceptions.
 Children as allies and advocates, respecting and protecting the rights of others
 All of the impacts described above will be well evidenced by photographs, the letters the children write and receive, video footage, and the school’s Facebook page.

These objectives replace the previous equality objectives set in April 2016.

Progress towards the objectives will be reviewed annually, and they will remain our objectives until April 2025, when they are due to be refreshed.

Document Record

Version	Reason for Amendments/Update/Review	Date of Adoption by Seghill First School	Date of next review
1.0	New document provided by Gill Finch	March 2023	March 2025