



EQUALITY ACT 2010

THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY **Date of Publication: February 2017 – SVCS updated March 2023**

On 5 April 2011 the Public Sector Equality Duty (The Equality Duty) came into force in England, Scotland and Wales.

The 3 aims of the General Duty are to:

1. **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.** By removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
2. **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** By taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
3. **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** By encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Stour Valley Community School has considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the nine protected equality groups:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In compiling this equality information we have:

- Identified evidence already in the school of equality within policies and practice and identified gaps.
- Examined how our school engages with the protected groups, identifying where practice could be improved.

EQUALITY INFORMATION

Protected characteristics	Aims of the general duty		
	What evidence do we hold that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	How do we advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?	How do we foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment procedures ensure that all candidates are shortlisted and interviewed on their suitability for the post. • Recruitment monitoring information is only seen by one person, who is not involved in interview selection processes. • Staff body consists of employees representing the full age range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant policies have a statement about equality and are accessible to relevant stakeholders. • All staff have access to professional development opportunities. • Where appropriate, all students are invited to be involved in activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect. This is supported by the Code of Ethics. • Teaching encourages positive attitudes towards people of all ages. • Positive role models of all ages are presented to students. • School values include 'Be Kind'.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying based on disability is recorded and reported upon to the Governing Body. Any such incidents are treated seriously with severe sanctions imposed. • Inappropriate talk or actions that promote discrimination on the grounds of disability are challenged by staff and incidents logged. • Recruitment procedures ensure that all candidates are shortlisted and interviewed on their suitability for the post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will avoid stereotypical assumptions about students' abilities and aptitudes. • All students will be encouraged to consider the full range of options before and after GCSEs. • If progress tracking shows students are falling below expectations then interventions are put in place. • The site is fully accessible to students and staff with a wide range of disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will take active steps to ensure that disabled parents are encouraged to become involved in the school. • Prospective parents are welcomed to published events but also offered a private tour. • Disabled students are fully involved in school life along with non-disabled peers. • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school time visits are planned to accommodate all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Support Assistants have a wide range of experience and training and are allocated to students based on their understanding of the needs of each individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy make clear expectations.
Gender Reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will not discriminate in the selection of new staff on any criteria apart from their ability to perform the role outlined within the job description. • Students are met with on an individual basis to agree how best the school can meet their needs for the stage of their transition. • School makes reasonable adjustments to support students as appropriate (eg using preferred names and pronouns, re-taking school photo to reflect gender identity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have access to professional development opportunities. • All students will be encouraged to consider the full range of options before and after GCSEs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect. • Issues of equality and diversity will feature in staff inductions, training and staff meetings, as appropriate. • Students are encouraged to take part in all activities with special arrangements (eg for changing) being made on an individual basis. • LGBTQ+ Champion and committee offer ongoing support and safe spaces to explore views.
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment procedures ensure that all candidates are shortlisted and interviewed on their suitability for the post. • Students are admitted on the admissions criteria without consideration of their parents' marital status. • Requests for absence are considered on their merit and made in line with the absence policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage and civil partnership are both discussed within the curriculum as valid choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role models are presented to students. • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect.

<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who become parents will have individual arrangements made for them to continue their education at SVCS. • Working practices will be adjusted in line with health and safety advice during pregnancy. • Employment law relating to maternity and paternity leave will be upheld. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support the education of any student who is pregnant in line with health and safety advice. • All staff will continue to have access to professional development opportunities and this will be monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of equality and diversity will feature in staff inductions, training and staff meetings, as appropriate. • Pregnant mothers or fathers-to-be will be supported on an individual basis to continue to be active members of the school community.
<p>Race</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data shows ethnic minority groups perform at least as well as other groups. • Recruitment procedures ensure that all candidates are shortlisted and interviewed on their suitability for the post. • Recruitment monitoring information is only seen by one person, who is not involved in interview selection processes. • Inappropriate words or actions that promote racial discrimination are challenged by staff and incidents logged. • Incidents of racist bullying are centrally recorded and reported to the Governing Body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant policies have a statement about equality and are accessible to relevant stakeholders. • Student groups are analysed during progress tracking and interventions initiated as required to avoid underachievement. • Admission to the school is available to all minority ethnic groups and is administered consistently and fairly by an external body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Code of Conduct reflects values of honesty and respect. • Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy make clear expectations. • A Racism Awareness Booklet is completed by anyone demonstrating racist views to promote greater understanding. • All students have access to the full curriculum. • Diversity is promoted through assemblies, fundraising events and curriculum areas. • Anti-bullying week is an annual focus. • Racially diverse examples of successful people will be used to challenge racial stereotypes.
<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority of students are recorded as Christian. • Annual uptake of GCSE RS is consistently positive. • Incidents of bullying related to religion or belief are centrally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will facilitate the need for students to observe religious requirements in relation to worship. • Students own experiences and beliefs are valued and, where 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect. • Teaching methods will encourage positive attitudes to religious diversity and equality.

	<p>recorded and reported to the Governing Body. Any such incidents are treated seriously with sanctions imposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate talk or actions that promote religious discrimination are challenged by staff and recorded. • Requests for absence are considered in light of religious observance. 	<p>possible and appropriate, used as source material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual arrangements are put in place to meet the requests of individual families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of religious festivals are acknowledged and celebrated throughout the year in assemblies and through the curriculum.
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying incidents based on sex are centrally recorded and reported to the Governing Body. Any such incidents are treated seriously with sanctions imposed. • Inappropriate talk or actions that promote sexual discrimination are challenged by staff and incidents logged. • All students take part in all subject areas. • Recruitment procedures ensure that all candidates are shortlisted and interviewed on their suitability for the post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant policies have a statement about equality and are accessible to relevant stakeholders. • Students are tracked by groups, including sex. Performance compared to the whole school community is monitored in relation to academic indicators. • Teaching methods are varied to promote achievement from both boys and girls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching methods will be varied to promote by both genders in all subject areas. • Examples of successful people will be used to challenge gender stereotypes.
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophobic bullying is recorded and reported upon to the Governing Body. Any such incidents are treated seriously with sanctions imposed. • Inappropriate talk or actions that promote homophobic discrimination are challenged by staff and incidents logged centrally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant policies have a statement about equality and are accessible to relevant stakeholders. • All students are encouraged to consider the full range of options before and after GCSEs, regardless of sexual orientation. • Inclusive language is used within the school to reflect acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Code of Conduct reflects values of equality and respect. • Teaching methods will encourage positive attitudes to religious diversity and equality. • Teaching methods will encourage positive attitudes to sexual diversity and equality. • The school has a Stonewall Champion and LGBTQ+ group.

EQUALITY ENGAGEMENT

Protected characteristics	Aims of general duty		
	How have we engaged with the protected groups in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	How have we engaged with the protected groups in order to advance equality of opportunity?	How do we engage with protected groups in order to foster good relations?
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student representation through student council. • Procedures are in place to ensure that applications are shortlisted against the job specification, regardless of the candidate's age. • There is a procedure in place to consider applications not in chronological year group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open discussion as part of line management meetings about future plans. • Opportunities for flexible working, if appropriate arrangements can be made. • Apprenticeships are available to give applicants of any age an entry route into school-based jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed age tutor groups in the lower school. Reviewed by students. • Open discussion as part of line management meetings about future plans.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student representation through student council. • Introduced procedures to ensure that information on application forms which identifies disability is removed before shortlisting. • Discussions with parents of disabled students to understand their aspirations for their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of specialist services. • Individual meetings and support at points of transition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student representation through student voice. • Individuals consulted to identify any additional needs they may have. • Performance Management discussions to review additional needs.
Gender Reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are in place to ensure that applications are shortlisted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual discussions to understand the stage of transition and needs of the person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals consulted to ask what is appropriate to them.

	<p>against the job specification and no other criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals encouraged to report any concerns to anyone they are comfortable speaking to. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the school community treat each other with respect. Request that any failure of this to happen should be reported and is then acted upon.
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship status is not requested or discussed as part of the application process. • Discussions about relationships take place without assumptions being made. • All parents are made welcome regardless of their personal relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All opportunities are made available to all members of staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cards and presents are bought from the whole staff to celebrate significant life events. • Requests for leave are supported to allow colleagues to accompany their partners to events and appointments.
Pregnancy and Maternity / Paternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Training to ensure that the legal rights of staff are fully understood and implemented on request. • Positive messages about parenting leave given to staff. • Paternity leave encouraged and arranged for the best time to suit the father. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If posts are advertised during leave then all staff members are informed of the opportunities. • Policy and practice makes parenting leave available to both males and females. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open discussion as part of line management meetings about future plans. • Communications maintained between staff on leave as frequently as they wish.
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student representation through student council. • Information on application forms which identifies race is removed before shortlisting. • Students aware that they can self-report racist incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Year 9 Options interviews to ensure all individual students are making appropriate choices. • Student representation through student council. • Student progress monitored and interventions put in place as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images and examples in curriculum from a range of ethnic backgrounds. • Student representation through student council.

<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are in place to ensure that applications are shortlisted against the job specification, regardless of the candidate’s religion or belief. • Engagement with families to understand their beliefs and preferences for eg sex education, RS lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students are expected to undertake all aspects of curriculum. • Ability to request time off for religious observance. • Where appropriate the experiences of individuals used in lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absences approved if students request time off for religious holidays. • Open discussion as part of line management meetings about issues relating to religion and personal beliefs. • Staff able to make requests to not present certain lesson materials which conflict with their beliefs.
<p>Sex</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced procedures to ensure that information on application forms which identifies gender is removed before shortlisting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Year 9 Options interviews to ensure all individual students are making appropriate choices. • All students are expected to undertake all aspects of curriculum. • Discussed with students why some subjects are more appealing to some gender groups. • Positive mix of males and females in staff and Governor roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student representation through student council. • All students are expected to undertake all aspects of curriculum. • Gender stereotypes are challenged with students and parents to encourage students to examine why they make certain choices.
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are in place to ensure that applications for posts or school places do not reveal a person’s sexual orientation. • Where allegations of bullying or harassment are made the victim is empowered to make choices about how situations are investigated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Year 9 Options interviews to ensure all individual students are making appropriate choices. • Policy and practice makes requests for family leave available to all members of staff, regardless of their family make-up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open discussion about any issues as part of line management meetings. • Positive role models are used to promote acceptance and understanding.

Summary Statement of Effectiveness

Age: Stour Valley Community School is effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting age equality, with staff being appointed according to their ability to fulfill roles. Students are taught in chronological age groups; however there is a mechanism in place for students to be taught out of age group, as appropriate. Overall, girls make greater progress than boys but there is variance within subjects. Incidents of poor behaviour are can be from both males and females.

Disability: Stour Valley Community School is highly effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting disability equality and students with disabilities make at least the same level of progress as all other students.

Gender Reassignment: Stour Valley Community School is highly effective in dealing with gender reassignment and ensuring individuals receive the medical and emotional support they need. The subject is discussed openly amongst students and staff.

Marriage and civil partnership: Stour Valley Community School is highly effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to supporting relationships of all types. Different types of relationships are presented as positive and openly discussed as part of the curriculum.

Pregnancy and Maternity: Stour Valley Community School is highly effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting family life, with parenting and adoption leave being positively encouraged.

Race: Stour Valley Community School is effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting race equality. Incidents of reported racial bullying are robustly recorded and addressed.

Religion and Belief: Stour Valley Community School is effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to acknowledging the beliefs of individuals. Appropriate leave for religious events is agreed and individual arrangements are in place to address specific family requests in relation to curriculum content.

Sex: Stour Valley Community School is effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting sex equality. There is a good balance of male and female role models amongst the staff and Governing Body. Boys, on average, do not make as much academic progress as girls.

Sexual Orientation: Stour Valley Community School is highly effective as policies and practice demonstrate a commitment to promoting equality on the grounds of sexual orientation. Many students are open about their sexual orientation, homophobia is reported by students as bullying and there is a general acceptance of difference amongst students.

EQUALITIES OBJECTIVES ACTION PLAN

DATE OF PUBLICATION : March 2023

Objective	Which protected group(s) will this most affect/influence?	How will we know we have achieved the objective?	Lead Staff Member	Actions (with date/timescale)
To narrow the progress gender gap between girls and boys	Sex Boys	At the end of each term the data is analysed and the gap can be measured.	Cath Bank	Data Analysis Dec, Apr, Jul 2023
Reduce the number of fixed term exclusions of boys	Sex Boys	The number of fixed term exclusion days to be reduced	Cath Bank	Target interventions with previously excluded boys to prevent re-offending. Use Graduated Response to identify additional support July 2023
To increase understanding and tolerance of cultures other than their own	Religion and Belief	Student engagement with world issues and other cultures is positive and no negative incidents are reported	Jon Craig	To increase opportunities for students to become aware of world issues July 2023
Proportionately increase the representation of individual specific characteristic groups on the Governing Body	Race Disability	The Governing Body profile shows a greater representation of people with protected characteristics	Nick Vosper	Prospective Governors with protected characteristics to be encouraged to apply to be a Governor August 2023