



THE VALLEY SCHOOL

## EQUALITIES STATEMENT

JULY 2020 – (FULL GOVERNING BOARD)

### KEY PRINCIPLES

#### **“Learn to Believe – Learn to Achieve”**

#### **“Different for Different”**

The Valley School welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for all. All of our pupils have learning difficulties and a large majority also have autism and/or speech, language and/or communication needs. As such, the Valley School has a particular responsibility to work to reduce and remove the inequalities and barriers that already exist for our students. We believe that we do this best by identifying the learning needs of our students as individuals and working with them and their families to meet them. Eliminating disadvantage for all is at the heart of what we do.

Our duty to promote equality applies to all who come to our school, either to work or study and we aim to observe good equalities practice in all aspects of our work. In this document, we publish information about the students who come to our school. We are not required to publish information about the school's workforce, although we are committed to ensuring that those who have protected characteristics are not discriminated against and have equality of opportunity. We also seek to promote good relations between people from all of these groups.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires our school to publish information about Equalities. The Equality Act 2010 clearly states that the following groups must be taken into account. People identified in the following groups are considered to have a protected characteristic.

#### **Protected Characteristics:**

- 1 Age
- 2 Disability
- 3 Sex (gender)
- 4 Race (ethnicity)
- 5 Pregnancy and Maternity
- 6 Religion and Belief
- 7 Sexual Orientation
- 8 Transgender
- 9 Marriage and Civil Partnership

In schools, age is a relevant characteristic when considering our role as an employer, but not in relation to our students.

#### **General Duties**

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are to:

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

### Specific Duties

The two specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty are to:

1. Publish information.

We are required to publish information about our students and their characteristics, although we may not publish information that may lead to the identification of individual students. The school is not required to publish information about the adults who work at the school as there are fewer than 150 adults who work at the school.

2. Set Equality Objectives.

We have set objectives to fulfil our public sector equality duty. These relate to our school development plan objectives. A revised analysis of the population of our school will be published as new data becomes available.

Our work to promote equality is also reflected in other school policies and we have been mindful of this when producing them.

<b>Who comes to our school?</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
	% Boys	% Girls
Overall	68.2	32.8
Year 7	69.2	30.8
Year 8	65.5	35.5
Year 9	64.7	35.3
Year 10	64.5	35.5
Year 11	76.6	23.3
<b>Ethnic groups and English as a First Language</b>		
<b>White</b>	School %	
British	75.3	
Irish	0.65	
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0.0	

Romany or Gypsy	0.0
Any other white background	4.5
<b>Mixed</b>	School %
White and Black Caribbean	2.6
White and Black African	1.9
White and Asian	1.9

Any other mixed background	0.0
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	School %
Indian	1.3
Pakistani	0.0
Bangladeshi	0.6
Any other Asian background	1.9
<b>Black or Black British</b>	School %
Caribbean	0.6
African	3.9
Any other Black background	0.6
<b>Chinese</b>	0.0
<b>Any other ethnic group</b>	0.0
<b>Parent / pupil preferred not to say</b>	0.6
<b>Ethnicity not known</b>	3.2
<b>First Language</b>	School %
English	94.2
Other	5.2
Unclassified	0.6

As a special school, students are admitted following the production of an EHCP. These are tailored to meet the individual needs of the student. This means that the proportion of students in any group is dependent upon individual need.

The proportion of pupils of each gender reflects the national picture that more boys are identified as having learning difficulties than girls. As can be seen from the different proportions of boys and girls in each year group, the figures vary from year to year. Students are admitted as their EHCPs identify this school as appropriate for them and there are therefore more in-year admissions than in other settings.

The proportions of students from different ethnic backgrounds statistically does conform broadly to national figures, although membership of different ethnic groups varies from national averages. This is because admission is based upon the identified needs of our students through their EHCP. Our school population does not reflect the proportion of populations in our local community as a result.

Our responsibility therefore is to promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that the individual needs of our children are met through carefully constructed programmes that address them.

Our second objective arising from the varied needs of our individual students is to eliminate discrimination in school whether through the promotion of equality of opportunity in our curriculum provision or through the implementation of our policies, each with key principles reflecting our commitment to good values.

### **Disadvantaged Students**

% eligible for free school meals	School %
2016	30.5
2017	32.8
2018	34.5
2019	38.9

The proportion of students eligible for free school meals has always been high at this school compared to national figures. In the last three years, this proportion has risen.

Our objective is to monitor the progress of students eligible for free school meals and use pupil premium funding to support their learning and pastoral needs so that these students are able to secure the same outcomes as their peers. An analysis of our performance is available on our website.

### **Main SEN Need**

	2017	2018	2019
Moderate Learning Difficulty	28	28	32
Severe Learning Difficulty	2	4	4
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	1	0	1
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	3	15	22

Speech, Language & Communication Needs	18	31	31
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	45	40	48
Specific Learning Difficulty	4	6	6
Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty	0	1	1
Physical Disability	1	1	1
Other Difficulty/Disability	13	1	6
Visual Impairment	1	2	1
Hearing Impairment	0	1	0
<b>School Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>154</b>

Our objective is to ensure that the varying needs of our students are met as the school's population changes. This means that our provision will adapt to meet their needs and the training of staff will support these changes.

The Equalities data (above) will be revised as new information becomes available.

## Attainment

We aim to ensure that all students make at least good progress throughout their time with us. We monitor the progress of all students regularly throughout the academic year. Progress data is updated and reported each half term. The data gathered is analysed by the Headteacher along with learning leaders and intervention is arranged to support any students or cohorts who are falling behind. Reports on progress are made to governors.

The school aims to ensure that all students are supported to make progress and students are entered for examinations and qualifications that are designed to meet their needs. A separate report about year 11 attainment is available on the school website.

## Actions taken by the school to promote Equalities:

School 'Learning for Life' Programme, followed by all years in the school emphasises equality issues in regular discussions.

RSE programme focused on respect and equality for all.

Whole school awareness training around LGBT+ issues and how the celebration of differences can be promoted within the classroom.

School ethos, values and mission statement focuses on respect, tolerance and celebration of difference.

The Values curriculum is being embedded into much of the everyday curriculum. Each half term there is a focus on a specific value, introduced in assemblies and embedded during curriculum

time. Values include Respect, Cooperation, Thoughtfulness, Tolerance, Friendship, Happiness, Trust and Responsibility. These run on a 2 year cycle.

Creative Days promote celebration and appreciation of difference. They are also used to promote knowledge and understanding of people of other cultures. Over the year these are explored through a Creative Caring Day, Creative Thinking Day, Creative Outdoors Day, Creative Teamwork Day and a Creative Curriculum Week.

We use assembly time to promote the theme of equality. Special assemblies to promote a range of the Valley School Values.

Recent Assembly Themes include:

- Addressing Mental Health Issues
- Celebrating talent
- Respect of self and others
- Understanding Environmental Issues
- Democracy – the school referendum

The R.E. programme delivered through Humanities at Key Stage 3 and discretely at Key Stage 4 under the Values label promotes spiritual development and awareness of the different cultures in British society around given values.

Our commitment to “different for different” applies to all areas of our school. In treating everyone differently and meeting needs on an individualised basis, we promote our ethos and beliefs that everyone is of equal value because of and not in spite of their differences. We value difference and encourage all of our school community to be proud of who they are, their background, their uniqueness and their contribution to the school community and to society in general. This ensures that our pupils and staff embody tolerance and respect.