



LIGHT YEARS SCHOOL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Policy Author	Dan Tresman
Date:	1 st September 2023
Ratified by Chair of Governors	13 th March 2024
Review Date:	1 st September 2024

Safeguarding at Light Years School

At Light Years School, we are committed to providing an environment in which students feel safe and secure to access their education. All stakeholders are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff are encouraged to maintain an "it could happen here" attitude. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. Light Years School are dedicated to creating a strong safeguarding culture, and that the safety and well-being of children is the central thread that embeds itself through all aspects of the school. If a person is concerned about anything they read, witness or hear with regards to the school, they should contact the school's designated safeguarding lead immediately or Headteacher. Safeguarding, and the safety and well-being of all pupils at Light Years School is carefully considered and a central theme through all school policies.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Light Years School

At Light Years School, we are passionate about providing an inclusive education to children with special educational needs. We recognise and celebrate the individuality of our pupils and use personalised approaches, allowing pupils with SEND to feel supported during the school day. We strive to provide pupils with the same opportunities and experiences that pupils would have received at a mainstream school, believing passionately that in the right environment, with the right support, pupils will flourish in education. We do this by focusing on providing a SEND friendly environment, an adapted curriculum and a strong focus on developing pupils' personal, social and emotional development. The special educational needs and disabilities of all pupils at Light Years School is carefully considered and a central theme in through all school policies. For more information, please read the school's SEND Information Report.

The **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** should be read in collaboration with the following policies:

Referral and Admission Policy
Attendance Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Positive Behaviour Policy
SEND Information Report
Staff Wellbeing Policy

Introduction:

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity, and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. 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 pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture. For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy.

National and Legal Context:

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff). We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

School Context:

Light Years School is an Independent Special School in the North-West ward of Fareham Town. Our maximum school roll will be 40 pupils, male and female, between the ages of 7-11 years.

All of our pupils have special educational needs and or disabilities. Some of our families are supported by Social Care, with identified areas of need under Child Protection, Child in Need and the Early Help Hub. All of our children receive support from our internal SALT and Occupational Therapy team. All pupils receive access to a Thrive provision whether 1:1 or within the classroom. Our pupils follow a strong multi-sensory curriculum to meet their individual learning needs and benefit from further therapeutic provision which includes Lego Therapy and Emotional Literacy Support Assistance.

The percentage of service families at Light Years School is 16.7%.

The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 25% (above the national average)

The percentage of pupils who are recognised Young Carers is 50% (above national average)

Principles:

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value:

- We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:
- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex
- Whatever their gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age
- Whether or not they have a connection with the forces community

- Whether or not English is their first language

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers and pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.

Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.

Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.

Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that we all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.

Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.

Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.

Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging; we intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics.

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed in School Council meetings or through pupils consultations; for parents, through parent governor representation and through the parent questionnaire; and for staff, through staff governor representation or through staff questionnaires and regular meetings. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We will maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix 1

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our work with other professionals
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities:

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs
- work with other professionals and the wider community.

Supporting Organisations:

Equality and Human Rights Commission - The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the independent advocate for equality and human rights in Britain. It aims to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people, and promote and protect human rights. It provides guidance for employers and education providers.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance> A detailed list of further sources of advice and information is available at Section 5 of the following guidance:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/good-equality-practice-employers-equality->

Department for Education Non-statutory Advice

Non-statutory Guidance is available from the Department for Education relating to the Equality Act in the following publication:

The Equality Act 2010 and Trusts. Departmental advice for Trust leaders, Trust staff, director bodies and local authorities

Other organisations offering support and information

ACAS provides information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems, include detailed guidance on Equality and Diversity at Work.

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1363>

Monitoring:

The school policies published on the school's website evidence Light Years school's commitment to the principles outlined in this policy and the public sector equality duty. This Policy will be reviewed and ratified by our School Governors.

Note: The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require Governing Bodies to publish equality information on an annual basis.

Equality Information – Appendix 1

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Objectives

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under 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.

Light Years School is an inclusive school where we celebrate differences, focus on the well-being and progress of every child and a place where all members of our community are valued.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to provide support and challenge where there is disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value
2. We recognise, respect and celebrate difference
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of belonging.
4. We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.
5. We aim to recognise and then reduce and remove inequalities and barriers.
6. We have the highest aspirations and expectations of all our children.

Protected characteristics:

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. Every person has several of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment. In order to ensure that all pupils are protected from discrimination, the school collects information on protected characteristics.

In addition to pupils with protected characteristics, we gather further information on the following groups of pupils:

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and the Pupil Premium
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Young carers
- Looked after children
- Pupils supported under Social Care
- Pupils of Service Families

Eliminating discrimination:

We work to eliminate discrimination by:

- Ensuring that equalities and Inclusion is a core part of our school's ethos and values
- Our behaviour/relationships policy ensuring that all children feel safe at school
- Reporting, responding to and monitoring of any incidents which have prejudice as their main cause e.g. homophobic, racist behaviours etc...
- Regularly monitoring the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of our pupils and that it promotes respect for diversity and challenges stereotyping
- Ensuring that all pupils have opportunities for enrichment activities through 'Personal Development' and a multi-sensory curriculum in support of identified needs as set out in individual Educational Health Care Plans.
- Listening to and monitoring views and experiences of pupils, parent, staff and stakeholder questionnaire and consultation.

Our equality and inclusion objectives – September 2023 – July 2025

At Light Years school we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, religion or socio-economic background.

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We will involve staff, pupils, parents and stakeholders in the following ways:

- parent questionnaires
- Staff questionnaires
- Pupil consultations
- curriculum workshops, open to all parents for key skill areas
- whole school assemblies, embracing a breadth of cultures
- the school curriculum, designed to enable children to understand and respect diversity
- disability awareness sessions run for pupils through the curriculum
- strong inclusion agenda through school improvement planning and governor monitoring
- developing an accessible site and adapted equipment
- working towards being a Rights Respecting school
- direct contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics
- strong School Council and pupil groups to support pupil voice
- parenting support workshops and advice sessions with the Inclusion Manager
- Multi-agency approach, working closely with SEN, Communication and Interaction Team, Social Care, CAMHS and school nursing team
- Relationships, Health and Sex Education curriculum
- RE curriculum which includes learning about a range of faiths and other world views curriculum enhancement through projects about specific cultures/communities, drawing on pupil suggestions, own experiences

- Fund raising (Comic and Sports Relief, Children in Need, Rainbow Centre, Anti-bullying Week etc.)

