



John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School Single Equality Scheme

2014-17



Foreword

"This Single Equality Scheme brings together the school's approach for promoting equality in our policies and procedures and, most importantly in our day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community.

Our scheme includes our whole school - pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers and all those within our extended school community.

We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being fully inclusive and accessible and ultimately in providing a quality learning experience for our children and young people."

Headteacher & Chair of Governors

"Our school is very friendly and we like taking care of each other. We like finding out about people who live in different places and looking after new people"

School Council

1 What is the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan?

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) and action plan covers a three-year period from **2014 to 2017**. It integrates our statutory duties in relation to race, disability and gender and promoting community cohesion. The duties cover staff, pupils and people using the services of the school such as parents.

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan enables us to achieve a framework for action which covers all six equality strands and ensures that we meet our responsibilities of the public sector duties in an inclusive way.

We will continue to meet our statutory duties by reporting annually (see section 14) on the progress of the Single Equality Scheme and action plan. This will be reviewed by our Board of Governors and will cover activity undertaken in relation to the six equality strands and promoting community cohesion.

2 Meeting our duties

Under the statutory duties all schools have responsibilities to promote race, disability and gender equality.

Race equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Dealing with racist incidents

We will follow the Local Authority Procedures for dealing with racist actions or any form of discrimination, as presented in their document *"Equality Strategy for Norfolk 2008 - 2011"*

Disability equality

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people which means that we must have due regard to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people

2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. Eliminate disability related harassment
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. Take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

Accessibility

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled pupils and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

1. Increase access to the curriculum
2. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access;
3. Make written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways

We must ensure that disabled pupils do not receive less favourable treatment and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Gender equality

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. Promote equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap. Norfolk County Council (the employing body of John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School) considers that this has been addressed through the implementation of the Modern Reward Strategy and unified conditions and pay for school teachers.

Transgender

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

Community cohesion

We recognise the important role our school plays in the promotion of community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. We have incorporated our policies into our Single Equality Scheme and Action to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting our objectives.

We have an ethos at John of Gaunt where children are encouraged to work together increasingly as they move through the school, developing their independence and care of others. All children take part in regular SEAL and Circle Times and through discussion start to understand that with rights come responsibilities. Children are involved in setting class rules and encouraged to take responsibilities within their classes. They are expected to be increasingly responsible for working hard either within a small group or independently and to look after their own belongings. Children are awarded with stickers and special awards in a weekly Smile File Assembly.

The school has clear policies on addressing any bullying and discrimination and children are encouraged to develop an awareness of the need for tolerance and understanding. The School Council system has helped the children to become more aware of their contribution to the school community.

As part of the Aylsham Cluster of Schools, we have drawn a set of Common Key Values - this will ensure consistency across the cluster and supports transition. The children take part in raising money/providing resources for charities such as Comic Relief, Children in Need and Operation Christmas Child and with the local Rotary Club. The children have increased their good understanding of their global community contribution through their partnership with Aylsham World Wide supporting projects in Kenya and Cambodia.

The Aylsham Cluster of Schools work very closely in a number of areas, not least in fulfilling the necessary provision of extended schools facilities. This collaboration has extended and formalised into the creation of The Aylsham Cluster Trust. All schools are delegated with funding from NCC to provide parents with access to extended schools services - our cluster pool this funding to provide a wider variety of services. Over the past five years our benefit from this pooled funding has been the allocation of a Parent Support Advisor, who supports vulnerable families and a Family Learning Co-Ordinator who organises family learning events in all the schools. The culmination of these activities has been a Family Learning Celebration every June - an exhibition of everything that has occurred in the Cluster, related to Family Learning. Parent Associations from the Cluster Schools organise events for families at Blickling Estate and Woodgate's Nursery.

The collaboration between schools has been strengthened with the delegation of SEND funding to the cluster. The Cluster has an established working party, and appointed 2 SEND hosts to ensure that all systems devised and implemented for the distribution of funding to schools is targeted at the most vulnerable pupils in our cluster, and the system is fair and equitable.

The Aylsham and Reepham Cluster Children's Centre is supported by all the schools in our cluster and provides a range of support and services to all our families.

Age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

3 Our school values and visions

A copy of our school aims is attached in the appendix. In addition, in meeting the duties described above will mean that all our actions will embody our school's key principles and values, which include:

- We strive to make the best possible provision 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 adopt the Norfolk Inclusion Statement's view that inclusion is: "The process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given the 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 experience of boys and girls.
- We know that equality is not simply protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by 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 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 all 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.

Our school within Norfolk's profile

Norfolk is a rural county with a diverse population of approximately 832,400. 39% of the population live in Norfolk's three major centres (Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth) but 37% live in communities with fewer than 2,500 people.

John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School is a smaller than average school serving the market town of Aylsham. The numbers are reasonably steady and are predicted to grow as there are new housing developments being built. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils come from minority ethnic families and none are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is below average.

4 Collecting and analysing equality information for pupils at "John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School"

John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School is an inclusive school. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We collect and analyse the following equality information for our pupils/students: including; Attainment levels, Attendance levels, Exclusions, Complaints of bullying and harassment

5 Collecting and analysing equality information for employment and governance at John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School

John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School also aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of our local population.

We currently employ 22 staff at John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School to undertake a range of duties.

The school workforce census enables us to collect data on staff relating to gender, race and disability. All staff vacancies are filled using the Local Authority application forms which contain requests for information relating to ethnicity, gender and disability. We acknowledge that this is not a specific requirement under the current legislation, but is best practice.

All information relating to staff is kept on the school's central database - SIMs

We collect and analyse the following profile information for our staff and governors:

- Applicants for employment (via local authority recruitment forms)
- Staff Profile
- Governing Body Profile
- Disciplinary and grievance cases - if any
- Staff appraisals/performance management

We have been mindful of the Laws relating to confidentiality when devising this Plan and Action Plan. Although there is a statutory duty to share information about the school's Single Equality Scheme, we recognise that care must be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that any information published cannot be used to identify individuals.

In respect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, any analysis of sensitive information is undertaken by a senior member of school staff.

We have identified the following issues from this information-gathering exercise:

- Low disclosure rates in respect of disability - currently one member of staff admits to having a disability as defined by the 2005 discrimination Act 2005. We need to ensure any information we hold is accurate and staff feel able to disclose this information freely without any fear of prejudice.
- Governing Body profile is not collected

Actions to address the issues identified have been prioritised over the three year life span of our scheme and have been included in our Action Plan.

7 Consultation and involving people

As stated earlier in the scheme, Aylsham is rural market town with a predominantly white community. We appreciate the legislation states it is important that minority groups (for race, disability and gender) are involved in the formulation and development of equality schemes and action plans, and we have endeavoured to involve as many people as possible in our community. We believe that there has been equal opportunity for all genders to contribute also.

We involved pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers, and our wider school community in creating the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This helped to ensure that the views of potentially disadvantaged groups were fully incorporated in the development of this Scheme and action plan.

We greatly value the collaborative way our local cluster of schools works. We have a shared belief that we have a combined obligation for the education of all children in our wider community. Together we strive for a parity of provision and an equality of opportunity - whichever school parents choose for their child. Therefore, this Single Equality Plan has been drawn up in conjunction with the cluster schools in Aylsham.

During discussions the following good practice was identified:

- Discussions at School Council
- Contact with parents/carers - newsletter, website and social media
- Discussions at Governing Body meetings or sub committees
- Discussions with cluster groups
- Contact with local community activities
- Contact with local community groups

Discussions also identified the following needs:

- Disabled access/toilets
- Staff trained on the needs some children have
- Friendly and approachable staff
- Procedures in place to meet any medical need children may have
- Care plans in place as necessary with good support and training from the school nursing team
- Good record of pastoral care
- Admissions form criteria includes information on disability
- Key policies in place - SEND, Behaviour & Discipline, Anti-Bullying
- Small school ethos - family feel
- IEP's in place for pupils with specific needs

- PSPSs in place for pupils experiencing emotional difficulties
- Considerable focus on recognising disability
- Information sharing through newsletters, website, community magazines etc.
- PSHE curriculum focuses on aspects of SEAL and outdoor learning and ensures a high priority is given to tolerance and understanding of differences (disability, race, religion and gender etc.).
- Nurture support staff to support vulnerable children

8 What we have achieved so far

This section details what we have achieved so far in relation to the equality duties and celebrating the outcomes.

Race equality

There have been no racist incidents at John of Gaunt during the last seven years. The cultural diversity of the school is changing with new families moving into the area and the school has worked hard to welcome these families and increase the pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural differences.

Disability equality

The school environment has been improved to ensure good access to all areas including the recent addition of John bear's workshop.

Gender equality

We have identified no major differences or trends in the attainment of pupils.

We promote equality of provision and opportunity for all boys and girls in all aspects of school life.

Community cohesion

In addition to the detailed description given earlier in this document, we also undertake the following:

Teaching, learning and curriculum

Our curriculum is fully accessible to all children. Families are regularly informed of the learning to take place through newsletters and the school VLE. All correspondence sent home is available from the school office in different languages/larger type if requested. We feel our curriculum has a global perspective, enabling children to see themselves in the context of the wider world community. We have excellent links with our local community and our relationship with Aylsham World Wide has been a strength.

Age

We feel that some elements of a child's involvement in school discussions is developmental, however there are representatives from all our classes (except Nursery) on our School Council. The School Council meets regularly and is supported by the Headteacher. These discussions are shared with classes and displayed on the School Council notice boards. As children progress through the school they begin to gain responsibilities and represent the school. This gives the children the opportunity to gain an understanding of what it means to be an active member of a community.

Religion or belief

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils are taught about the major festivals of world religions and about Christianity and Judaism in detail. Factual information is given about the different religions, but more importantly children are taught to respect faith and belief. Worship and prayer are explored in the context of all religions and we try to impart to children how important faith, belief, worship and prayer are to some people.

Even though John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School is not a denomination school we have very close links with local churches in our community. Every week different members of our community lead our school assemblies.

9 Equality impact assessments

Equality impact assessment is a systematic method of rigorously checking all school policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are genuinely accessible and meet the needs of our staff and the local community in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School is keen to ensure that none of its policies and practices disadvantage people with disabilities, from different ethnic backgrounds or different gender.

Following consultation, John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School will consider the impact of policies and from differing ethnic backgrounds, different genders and persons with disability, in the following areas:

- School Visits policy
- Lunchtime arrangements
- Ensuring books and software contain fair representation of persons whatever their ability, gender or ethnicity
- School performances - are they totally inclusive
- Is there equal representation on the Governing Body/staff body from differing groups of people?

www.equalityhumanrights.com

We undertake equality impact assessments to identify the impact or effect (either negative or positive) of our policies, procedures and functions on various sections of the population paying particular regard to the needs of minority groups. Where negative impacts are identified we then take steps to deal with this and make sure equity of service to all.

An inventory of existing policies has been undertaken and we are continuing to carry out an ongoing rolling programme of impact assessment for all our policies and procedures.

10 Other School Policies

We have used our existing school policies to inform our Single Equality Scheme. These include:

- School Improvement and Development Plan
- SEND policy
- Accessibility plan
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Behaviour and Discipline policy
- Whistle blowing policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

11 Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this Scheme and Action Plan.
- Our headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this Scheme, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.
- The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this scheme.
- Our staff are expected to promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs, maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- Our pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school, including parents/carers are adhering to our commitment to equality.

12 Commissioning and Procurement

John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School is required by law to make sure that when we buy services from another organisation to help us provide our services, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process

13 Publicising our scheme

Our Single Equality Scheme will be published on:

- School website and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
- Staff and parent newsletter
- Staff and pupil induction
- Friendly Friday Coffee Mornings

14 Annual Review of Progress

We will also revise our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan every three years.

We will continue to review annually the actions we have taken in the development of our Single Equality Scheme which include:

- The results of your information gathering activities for race, disability and gender and what you have done with this information
- The outcomes of involvement activities from minority groups
- A summary from equality impact assessments undertaken
- An update of the progress made against priorities
- Celebrating what you have achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion

15 Ongoing involvement of our Scheme

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing involvement of our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This includes:

- A regular slot at School Council meetings
- A regular slot at staff meetings
- Having staff available to discuss equality and diversity matters during parent consultation meetings
- Having annual school open days/evenings for the wider school community to celebrate the work of pupils and give the opportunity for feedback

Reviewed February 2017