

# **Single Equality & Community Cohesion Policy**

***Ashfield Valley Primary  
School***

**2021 – 2024**

Responsibility for this document Mrs A Begum  
Reviewed March 2021  
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In compiling this policy the following documents had been consulted for advice and guidance:

1. The Single Equality Act 2010: Advice for School Leaders
2. The Equality Act 2010: Technical Guidance for schools in England (e.g. Human Rights Commission)
3. Promoting Fundamental Values as part of SMSC in schools (Df Education) Nov 2014
4. The SEND Code of Practice 2014
5. Working together to Safeguard Children (2015/16)
6. Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils (2012): Technical Guidance (e.g. Human Rights Commission)
7. Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (Feb 2014) Stat Guidance DfE

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## Foreword

Rochdale MBC aims to be recognised as a leader of diversity and equality in its work and as an example of good practice in the delivery of services and employment. This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy for Rochdale's schools reflects this ambition and outlines the activities which will deliver this.

Equality of opportunity and social inclusion issues will ensure that all school communities can truly benefit from and contribute to the improvements we are making, which will bring long-term and positive benefits for Rochdale Borough. Therefore the school's Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy will require ownership by Governors, senior leaders, all staff, the school community and the pupils in order to succeed.

This policy serves essentially two purposes:

1. To set out a school's overall commitment to equality and community cohesion in one central document for past, present and prospective pupils. The policy therefore contains the school's approach to all relevant protected characteristics of: **Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual orientation**; and
2. How the school will manage, plan and include its Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy within its day to day work.

**Schools also have obligations as employers and a service provider against the protected characteristics of Age and Marriage and Civil partnerships.** These obligations are not covered in this framework as this policy is concerned with a school's obligations to its pupils (mainly present and prospective pupils and where relevant former pupils and staff). Separate policy guidance covering recruitment and employment is available from Schools Personnel team and the Local Authority.

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy will help schools ensure that they focus more on the outcomes that matter to pupils, community and people who use their services; and that their services are more accessible and delivered effectively. This policy provides a framework for the school to **eliminate prohibited conduct, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations** in a proactive way.

The Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy is based on the Equality Act 2010. Much of what is required of schools is already being carried out by them. The main new provisions in the Equality Act 2010 are:

- new disability discrimination provisions (direct disability discrimination, indirect disability discrimination and discrimination arising from disability)
- new protected characteristics:
- new positive action provisions

Schools also have a "specific duty" to publish information around their equality objectives in an accessible manner.

Finally, as schools are already aware, avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progression for all pupils. Good education and skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of a successful life. Furthermore, Equality and Community Cohesion is an important

part of OFSTED inspections through the Quality of Teaching judgement (Spiritual Moral Social & Cultural element) and need to be considered at all time.

**For more information contact**

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**Introduction**

There were a number of statutory duties that the school was required to meet prior to the Equality Act 2010. As such, with the implementation of this act and the harmonisation of previous legislation, this policy will refer to the Equality Act 2010 and its various provisions as the legislative framework through which this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy will operate.

In the development of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy, Ashfield Valley Primary School has moved from a focus on an individual response to an approach that builds on **disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation** considerations from the start and at every level of the school, at strategic, policy, management and classroom level. We will demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. This policy will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, and through the School Improvement and Self Evaluation process.

We will ensure that every pupil irrespective of the protected characteristics is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that every pupil has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We will ensure that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that the adults working or volunteering in the school include as much as possible a balanced representation of the local and wider community. We believe that this will provide good role models for pupils from all backgrounds.

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy will be linked to a joint action plan which sets out how we intend to implement the policy over the next three years.

Ashfield Valley Primary School sees this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy as a living document and we will continuously review the action plan in consultation with pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors and all other stakeholders where possible. We believe they need to be involved from the very start and their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of the policy and action plan to ensure that we meet the needs of people from different backgrounds.

The school is committed to the public sector duty which came into force from April 2011:

- eliminating prohibited conduct
- advancing equality of opportunity
- fostering good relations

## **Local and School context**

### **Population:**

Rochdale Borough population on Census day 2011 was estimated to be 211,699; 49% Male and 51% Female.

- The breakdown of age population is; 21% are under 16, 64% are between the ages of 16 and 64, and 15% are 65 and over. There are 136,100 residents of work age population (16 to 64).
- Older people aged 65 & over represent 30,816 of the Borough's population; 3,800 are aged 85 & over and 1,200 are aged 90 & over.
- There are 87,552 households across Rochdale Borough and 7,931 are occupied by lone parent households with dependent children. Pensioners make up 5,671 households, representing 6.5% of all households in Rochdale.
- 5,311 households are occupied with no adults in employment and with dependent children.
- There are 26,609 households with one or more person with a limiting long-term illness (30.4%)

### **Ethnicity, Identity, Language & Religion:**

- The ethnic breakdown of the Borough currently has a majority of 78.6% White British, with the second largest population being Asian or Asian British Pakistani, representing 10.5%.
- Rochdale has the second largest population of Kashmiri residents across England and Wales, occupying 1,658 residents, with Luton UA being the largest.
- 5% of residents do not identify with having any UK national identity, this compares to 8% in England and Wales.
- Rochdale has 3,402 households (3.9%) where no people in the household have English as a main language, similar to Oldham (4.5%) and Bolton (4.6%).
- The largest groups for religion in Rochdale are 60.6% Christianity, 13.9% Muslim and 18.9% reporting no religion.

### **Health:**

- 2% of Rochdale residents categorised their health as 'very bad', which is greater than regional and national comparators.
- There are 44,359 residents reporting a long-term health problem or disability and 23,981 are of working age (16 to 64).
- 10.7% of residents reported their day-to-day activities as being 'limited a lot' (22,630 residents).
- 23,260 carers across Rochdale provide unpaid care, with 6,105 providing 50 or more hours per week.

### **Education & Qualifications:**

- In 2012, 56% of pupils achieved a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5).
- In 2012, 77% of pupils left Primary School attaining national standards (Level 4 & above in English and maths).
- In 2012, 52% of pupils achieved 5+A\*-C including English and maths when leaving secondary school.
- Over 31% of the Borough's population aged 16-74 years reported Level 3 or Level 4/5 qualifications, which is an 11% improvement from the previous Census in 2001 (Census 2011).

## **Labour Market & Out of Work Benefits**

- From the population aged 16 to 74, the 2011 Census reported 101,003 residents economically active and 51,739 economically inactive. There are 9,334 unemployed people and from that number 1,614 have never worked.
- In 2012, 62.5% of the Work Age Population (WAP) was in employment, fewer than local (68.8%) and national (70.7%) comparators, although a greater proportion of economically inactive residents 'wants a job'.
- There were 7,368 JSA claimants in April 2013; twice the number of males compared to females. This figure represents 5.2% of WAP for Rochdale, compared to 4.2% regionally and 3.7% nationally.
- There are 27,740 total benefits claimants in Rochdale Borough (Nov 2012), representing 20.4% of WAP. ESA and incapacity benefits have the largest number of claimants (13,030).

*\* Figures based on snapshot data obtained from 2011 Census*

## **School Context:**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is a one form entry school in Rochdale, with a part time nursery class. There are currently 237 children on roll, including 39 part time nursery pupils. The school is well subscribed, and is characterised by a caring and inclusive ethos.

## **Ethnicity and Religion**

As of March 2021, 99% of children are from ethnic minorities: this places Ashfield Valley in a very small percentage of schools nationally with similar circumstances. The large majority of children have ethnic roots in Pakistan and are Muslims. There are also a rising number of asylum seeker children from Pakistan and North Africa. (2.5% of school roll Rec - Year 6 June 2015). This poses considerable challenges: the children can be admitted at any point in the school year, often with minimal notice and after lengthy periods out of education. The majority of the children are at a very early stage of learning English. Mother tongues include Urdu and Yoruba. The school community is predominantly Muslim.

## **Gender**

The school has more boys than girls, and this has been the case for a number of years: Currently 45.9% of pupils are girls.

## **Linguistic diversity**

99% of children come from homes in which at least two languages are regularly spoken. The principal home languages are Urdu, Punjabi and Mirpuri. Other languages include Slovakian, Polish, Portuguese, Kurdish, Arabic, Romanian, Russian, Yoruba and Romany.

Many parents are fluent in English, being educated in Britain, but equally, a number of parents are not confident users of English. Many parents require a translator when they come into school.

## **International new arrivals (INAs)**

In a two year period, 2019-21, the school admitted a number of children into Years 1-6 who were completely new to English: several of these children had never attended school before.

## **Staff and governors**

40% of teachers and 57% of support staff are from ethnic minorities. The majority of lunchtime organisers are from ethnic minority groups. 45% of classroom staff speak Urdu, Punjabi or Mirpuri and are available to support parents and children who are not confident in English. One of the admin staff is bilingual and is available to support parents who are not confident in English.

28% of the governing body are from ethnic minority backgrounds. This means that there is some representation on the governing body and governors are given an insight into the equality and cohesion issues facing the school.

The majority of the staff are female, and the school receives limited applications from male candidates. All applications are treated equally and appointments are made on merit alone.

## **Structure of our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy**

This policy document is designed to give a background to Ashfield Valley Primary School in respect of the protected characteristics in both education and service provision.

Recruitment and employment issues with regard to staff may be referenced but these will be covered in more detail under separate policy.

Therefore, we have set out below:

- The definitions in respect of each of the protected equality characteristics
- Our commitment for each of the protected equality characteristics
- Our headline achievements, aims and objectives for each of the protected equality characteristics

We have then set out our key approaches and tools to help us achieve these aims including:

- Our consultation and involvement strategy
- Our accountability processes for the policy
- Our commitment to publication and public access
- Our monitoring and review processes

## **Specific Equality Areas**

### **DISABILITY**

#### **What do we mean by Disability Equality?**

We recognise that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

#### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their disability.

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy incorporates our commitment and actions on disability equality. It demonstrates our commitment to addressing disability equality in our decision making and the delivery of education.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and other users of our services so they can have equal access to all our school and its services. This policy is a statement of our commitment and shows clearly how we will work over the next three years to achieve our goal.

We will continue to review our policies, practices and procedures so that they do not adversely affect anyone because of their disability. By also building this into our curriculum, working and procurement processes we will expect others to do the same.

#### **Our achievements (what we do well)**

- Teachers and TAs receive training and support in meeting the needs of disabled pupils, through RANS, speech therapy, Health Service and others as needed. The school has a commitment to inclusion of all pupils with special needs, and effort is made to remove barriers to learning and participation including the provision of aids and services.
- All pupils participate in all activities, with modification where appropriate. Staff recognise that some pupils need extra time or extra support to access the curriculum. Radio aids are used routinely for hearing impaired children. Access to assistive technology is secured as needed. Staff are trained in the use of Clicker as needed. Provision is made to support pupils on school trips.
- Building improvements have been made. All classrooms have blinds and carpets to assist children with hearing or visual impairments. Wheelchair lifts have been installed where possible: there is full wheelchair access around the school but sometimes a slightly longer route has to be taken.

- All areas are well lit. External access has been improved with ramps whenever possible. An adult disabled toilet has been installed in the entrance foyer. A disabled toilet/medical room has been installed off the school hall.
- We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of our learners including the provision of laptops, Ipads, Clicker software etc.
- We obtain transcriptions of mental maths tests to read out loud to children with hearing impairment. Teaching materials are routinely enlarged for children with visual impairment. We are aware of other means of presenting information for prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information.
- We provide pencil grips, chubby pens, right handed scissors, coloured overlays, coloured paper, double grip/handle scissors, calming balls, chewy necklace, wobble cushions, egg timers, visual timetables, reading rulers, change font size, colour, and font, change backgrounds on smart boards, and computers, computer screen overlays.

### **Our Aims and objectives (what we plan to do over the next three years)**

We have identified a number of specific actions designed to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. We have committed to:

- Maintaining the school's inclusive approach by ensuring that new staff receive appropriate support and training in meeting the needs of disabled children.
- Buy books that promote positive images about disability
- Celebrate specific days such as Autism Awareness Day
- National Disability Day etc

## **GENDER**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is a mixed sex school.

### **What do we mean by Gender Equality?**

We recognise that a person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to boys or girls.

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their gender.

We recognise that stereotypes exist for both genders and some can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes and welcome the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with specific provision for Gender Equality and we will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.

### **Our achievements (what we do well)**

- We foster the equal participation of boys and girls in curricular and extra-curricular activities. We also celebrate both male and female historical figures, explorers and scientists.
- We look at our teaching and learning to ensure equal access for all and use a multisensory approach when required. We avoid stereotyping in the curriculum e.g. all children participate in construction, ICT, sewing and cookery. Responsibilities are fairly distributed e.g. monitors and playground pals. Children are not routinely grouped by gender e.g. the register is in full alphabetical order; children are not asked to line up separately. We seek extracurricular provision that appeals to both boys and girls e.g. cricket, gymnastics, football and dance.
- Attainment of boys and girls is analysed and evaluated and needs are highlighted and planned for.
- We recognise that there may be cultural issues affecting the interaction of boys and girls in our community. However, we also seek to avoid making assumptions about gender issues in the community.
- We have had speakers from the community to talk about their jobs and to break down gender stereotypes
- We have had faith leaders – both male and female from the local community to talk about their beliefs e.g. male Imam and female Buddhist.

## **WHAT ELSE DO WE DO?**

### **Our Aims and objectives**

We have identified a number of specific actions to ensure equality and cohesion:

- Monitoring the school behaviour policy and records
- Monitoring the attainment of boys at higher levels in literacy all through the school.
- Monitoring the staff appointment process: the school receives very few applications from men. Applications from men are treated equally with applications from women and recruitment is on merit, not gender.
- Monitoring the uptake of extra-curricular provision to encourage more girls to participate in sport.

## **GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

### **What do we mean by gender reassignment?**

We recognise that a person may express their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical gender that they were born with.

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

We understand gender reassignment does not necessarily require a medical process to be undertaken and that a person will be protected because of gender reassignment if they:

- Make their intention known to someone at the school
- Start to behave or dress according to the gender they identify with
- Undergo treatment such as surgery or hormone therapy
- Have already received gender recognition under the gender recognition act 2004

The school will also respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

### **Our achievements**

This is a relatively new provision that we are currently exploring in school. We are aware of new support materials (e.g. The Rainbow Flag) which we will be exploring further.

- We have purchased a scheme and adapted the sessions to meet our school and we have taken into account the demographic that we serve.
- We note that there is a specific prohibition contained within the Equality Act 2010 which prohibits discrimination of staff who are absent from employment as a result of gender reassignment.
- We have updated our Anti-Bullying Policy to reflect this.

### **Our aims and objectives:**

- To ensure that staff are clearly briefed about gender reassignment.
- To plan to include some introductory material into our teaching
- Deliver assemblies to develop awareness

## **PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY/Paternity**

### **What do we mean by equality issues for pregnancy and maternity?**

To avoid treating a woman (or a female pupil of any age) less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger.

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their pregnancy or maternity.

We will also seek to make arrangements for female pupils or staff to ensure that they are not treated less favourably because they are pregnant or breastfeeding.

We will not discriminate against pupils or staff in absences related to pregnancy and maternity.

### **Our achievements**

- The school observes all HR policies regarding maternity.
- All pregnant staff are supported with maternity risk assessments.
- Appropriate time off is given for ante-natal appointments.
- New baby in the family work
- Single parent work
- We will always make reasonable adjustments of staff in respect of pregnancy, maternity and maternity
- Provide room for expressing

### **Our aims and objectives**

- We aim to continue meeting LA and national recommendations for the equal treatment of pregnant or breastfeeding staff or pupils.
- We will explore ways in which to discuss single parent, same parent families and adoption/carer families.
- Celebrate days of significance e.g. mothers' day, fathers' day, etc

## **RACE**

### **What do we mean by Race Equality?**

The school adopts the definition of race as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 as one of the protected characteristics which refer to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We recognise that race discrimination, harassment and victimisation may be experienced by all in a number of ways, including day-to-day interaction with fellow pupils, staff and visitors.

The School also recognises that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils and staff may experience discrimination on the basis of race, colour, nationality and ethnic origin. This discrimination can manifest itself in all areas of their lives and can have serious consequences in terms of damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities.

The school and governing body does not tolerate any form of race discrimination which it recognises is unacceptable, discriminatory and unlawful, and is proactive in ensuring that people whatever their race, are treated fairly. This commitment is consistent with the significant progress that the school has already made in this area.

We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to Race Equality.

### **Our achievements**

- We promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between racial groups, within school and also with regard to the wider community. This is fostered through the Behaviour policy, through curriculum content, through collective worship and school celebrations. The school strives at all times for an inclusive ethos. For example, we conduct celebrations in a manner in which all children can participate – there are no “rites” specific to one religion which might exclude other children. All school policies should make reference, where appropriate, to equal opportunities, including race equality issues.
- Our curriculum is based on inclusion. Learning materials recognise the value of diversity, and seek to avoid concentration on one culture or tradition only. At the same time, it is also important that ethnic minority children feel they belong in Britain. Diversity is reflected in the choice of literacy texts, and in themes for humanities, art and technology, for example. We strive to avoid using any materials which contain racist stereotypes, and aim to present positive images of diversity. We try to ensure that different cultural and ethnic groups are accorded equal value.
- In religious education, we follow Rochdale’s Agreed Syllabus for RE. Within this framework, we stress commonality, e.g. belief in God, similar ethical codes, and the importance of the religious community. We also emphasise the need for all religious and cultural groups in Rochdale to learn about each other, to build understanding.

- Planning for extra-curricular activities takes account of children's commitments outside school, and of parental concerns related to religion and culture. We aim to participate in LA initiatives where possible, e.g. LA Poetry weeks, Spiral Dance festival etc.
- We have high expectations of all our pupils, and we are aware that children at the early stages of learning English should not be viewed as having special needs, or being "slow learners". Access to the curriculum is provided through our classroom support. Our approach to English as an Additional Language and to bilingualism is described in the EAL policy.
- The school admission form includes details of religion, language, ethnic origin and dietary requirements. Care is taken to check the correct spelling and pronunciation of names. Regulations for school dress take account of cultural and religious considerations. In PE, however, health and safety requirements must always be paramount. School meals are provided by Facilities Management, including Halal meat and non-meat dishes.
- Where incidents of racist behaviour occur, these are usually concerned with unkind comments to children who are lighter or darker skinned (but still Pakistani), behaviour that excludes children who are not members of the school's main religious group, (i.e. Sunni/Shia), and refusal to accept that non Pakistani children may be Muslims. All racist incidents are reported on the LA termly returns.
- We support families new to Britain in settling down and in understanding life in Britain by offering support, guidance and information. We celebrate their heritage and teachers take time to teach their children about where their peers have come from to develop understanding and foster tolerance.
- Attainment data is analysed according to ethnicity, and comparisons made with the national figures for Pakistani children to ensure that we have high expectations.
- Our curriculum celebrates cultural and religious differences, embraces celebration days, beliefs and customs and raises awareness of diversity.

### **Our aims and objectives**

The school population is changing as more Eastern European children and asylum seeker children are being admitted. Our aims are to:

- To continue to support families new to Britain in settling down and in understanding life in Britain by offering support, guidance and information.
- To monitor and evaluate behaviour and attainment records to ensure equality of opportunity.
- To purchase books for the library which are age-appropriate on communicating messages about racial issues and encourage dialogue.
- To revisit our RE curriculum

## **RELIGION OR BELIEF**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is a community school maintained by the local authority. Ashfield Valley Primary School is not a faith school.

### **What do we mean by Religion or Belief equality?**

A religion or belief refers to a religious and/or philosophical belief including lack of belief (eg atheism). A religion must be identifiable and have a clear structure or belief system. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their lives or perceives the world (e.g. Humanism)

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect.

Faith-based hate crime and racial hate crime has been a new phenomenon in recent years, developing a character that is distinct from race hate crime. We recognise that discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief may be experienced in a number of ways, including day-to-day interaction with fellow pupils, staff and visitors.

The school seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and prejudice based on religion and/or belief or non-belief, either direct or indirect, and is committed to treating staff, pupils and others fairly, regardless of their religion or belief and will not condone unfavourable treatment on this basis.

We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to religion or belief and any incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief will be taken seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal or exclusion from the school.

### **Our achievements (what we do well)**

- **Collective Worship**

The school has a “determination” for collective worship. This allows us to promote the multi-faith ethos that we feel is appropriate for our school community (see Collective Worship policy).

- In religious education, we follow Rochdale’s Agreed Syllabus for RE. Within this framework, we stress commonality, e.g. belief in God, similar ethical codes, and the importance of the religious community. We also emphasise the need for all religious and cultural groups in Rochdale to learn about each other, to build understanding.
- We have implemented the new Relationships Education.

- **Attendance**

Term dates are planned to take account of Muslim religious festivals, recognising the significant numbers of Muslim children and staff in school. Our small population of Sikh children are also afforded this support.

- **School Trips and visits**

We make sure that all children in their life at Ashfield Valley Primary School will go out on trips to places of worship, including a mosque and a church. We ensure that staff and children show respect to the different places of worship, for example non-Muslim staff and children wear headscarves whilst visiting the mosque. We ensure that Muslim staff always accompany a visit to a church, and non-Muslim staff accompany a visit to a mosque, so that staff can role model positive attitudes and respect.

We invite faith leaders into school, representing all the religions taught on the RE curriculum. Invitations are only made to faith establishments that are well known to the school, and that offer validated educational programmes which are open to state schools and to children of all faiths. All visitors are assessed and approved by the headteacher before any appointments are made.

We have and will continue to participate in the LA's annual "Celebration of Faith" day, with all children participating in the art work or model making that is displayed on the day.

We have ongoing links with a Church of England school in Whitworth. The classes in Key Stage 2 write regular letters to each other and there are termly visits.

We hold a yearly "Celebration of Faith" week in the school year. We celebrate important events from different religions throughout the year e.g. Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Hanukkah.

### **Our aims and objectives**

- To maintain the regular programme of visits out and visitors in to school.
- To hold a focus week on "Celebration of Faith" in the school year 2021-22
- To ensure faith leaders visits are booked and secured for 2021-22

## **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

### **What do we mean by sexual orientation equality?**

The school uses the definition as outlined in legislation as sexual orientation meaning a person's sexual orientation towards:

- persons of the same sex
- persons of the opposite sex, or
- persons of either sex

The school extends the definition of this protected characteristic of sexual orientation to include:

- references to a person who is of a particular sexual orientation, or
- references to persons who share the same sexual orientation

### **Our commitment**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their sexual orientation.

The school will combat discrimination faced by lesbians, gay and bisexual (LGBTQI) people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBTQI people across our curriculum provision, services and employment.

We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about LGBTQI communities, both internally and to the community as a whole.

The school recognises the need to protect pupils and staff from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation). We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of our Equality Impact Assessment processes. This will include a scrutiny of our policies on Anti-Bullying, SEND etc.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

### **Our achievements**

- The school does not permit any form of homophobic bullying. There are no reported incidents in 2020-21.
- The children are taught to call others by their "proper names" only. Children are taught that it is unacceptable to call another child "gay".
- We develop the staff's understanding and awareness of equality issues around sexual orientation in line with our duties under the Single Equalities Act of 2010.
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### **Our aims and objectives**

- To continue to develop the staff's understanding and awareness of equality issues around sexual orientation in line with our duties under the Single Equalities Act of 2010.

- To develop school procedures for the appropriate language to use when discussing sexual orientation issues with the children.
- To continue to deliver the new RE curriculum.

## **COMMUNITY COHESION and British Values**

### **What do we mean by Community Cohesion and British Values**

Ashfield Valley Primary School adopts the Department for Education definition of community cohesion to mean working towards a society in which:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- Similar life opportunities are available to all, and
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community."
- We have a British Values Policy which embraces Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance. It also embraces the Prevent Strategy.

### **Our commitment**

For a number of years, we have been committed to promoting community cohesion as part of the response to the legal duties outlined in previous legislation.

We understand that Community Cohesion and British Values is the process that should happen in all communities to ensure that different groups and individual people get on well together. It should allow for new communities and existing communities to adapt and integrate with one another and embrace British Values.

The school will promote community cohesion and British Values within a number of dimensions including:

- the school community
- the community within which the school is located
- the community of Britain
- the global community.

### **Our achievements in the following areas:**

#### **Teaching, learning and curriculum**

- Children are taught to respect others, adults and peers. Through assemblies, R(S)E, RE and our general approach to behaviour and discipline, children are taught to respect and celebrate commonality and difference between people of different sex, ethnicity and religion, or of no religion. Our approach to behaviour management is rooted in the Rights Respecting Schools ethos. The curriculum seeks to present positive images of different communities and ethnic groups. The curriculum reflects the achievements of both men and women in the arts and in history. The curriculum also explores issues around Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance.
- Children are encouraged to participate in wider community issues, for example fundraising for charity, anti-bullying week, the Olympics, and celebrating the Queen's birthday or Jubilee. Ashfield Valley is an eco-school, and we have recently supported Rochdale Council's drive to extend recycling across the borough.

- Year 4 participate in the Linking Project every year. Our year 4 class links with another school that is located in a different demographic. Pupils write to one another and meet three times a year and engage in a range of team building activities.
- We have a well-established 'narrowing the gap/catch up' Programme through robust identification procedures and quality interventions.

## **Equality and excellence**

We analyse carefully the attainment and progress of different groups of children. Children's needs are met through Quality First teaching, and individual needs are met through Wave 2 support (for example Narrowing the Gap) or Wave 3 support (for example specific SEN programmes.) Currently we are focussing particularly on the attainment of boys.

## **Engagement and extended services**

The school has an open door policy for parents. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic there was a play group once a week for all parents with pre-school age children. Nursery parents were invited to "Stay and Play" regularly. The Foundation Stage have regular open days for parents to join in with their children's learning. We have run adult classes in school for many years, including ESOL, citizenship, well-being, First Aid, and healthy cooking. We hope to resume these classes when the Covid-19 restrictions and our risk assessment permits.

The school puts on Christmas and Eid fairs yearly. These family fun events encourage people of different backgrounds to get together.

## **Our aims and objectives**

- To continue to create a sense of shared values, through promoting "British Values"
- To continue to build on the Rights Respecting Schools approach
- To emphasise the need for fairness and trust between individuals and groups.
- To develop an understanding of "good manners" in our children and our adults.
- Explore the potential for reintroducing play group once a week for all parents with pre-school age children Covid-19 restrictions permitting.

## **Our desired outcomes are**

- A widely shared sense of the contribution of different communities to a shared vision.
- A strong sense of individual rights and responsibilities within the school community.
- That all children and parents feel they are being treated fairly and have the same opportunities.
- That children and parents trust the school to act fairly.
- We have strong and positive relationships.

## **Safeguarding & Building Resilience**

Ashfield Valley Primary School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by taking all reasonable steps to protect them and build resilience in accordance with the DfE guidance.

This commitment is in line with our school's Child Protection and Prevent policies and applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

## **Preventing Radicalisation**

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from child sexual exploitation, drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

The Prevent strategy aims to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early age can be exposed to terrorist and extremist influences or prejudiced views. We recognise that as with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable. Our school is committed to working with other local partners, families and communities, and we will play a key role in ensuring young people and their communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

We also recognise that our school has a duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Prevent can work within both violent and non-violent extremism arenas and can include topics such as hate crime, racism, bullying, on line safety and extreme political views.

Our school is committed to:

- Establishing a single point of contact in terms of safeguarding.
- Assessing the risk of students being drawn into terrorism.
- Training staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism.
- Referring vulnerable people to Channel.
- Prohibiting extremist speakers and events.
- Managing access to extremist material- ICT filters
- Promoting British Values

We recognise that some young people, who are vulnerable to extreme views, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. We also recognise that their behaviour may be challenging at times, and that some may cause offence or harm to others. We will therefore always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils by:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in

our school setting

- identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation, and taking appropriate action in accordance with the school's Safeguarding procedures with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting.
- making appropriate referrals to the Local Authority for early intervention and support where necessary
- ensuring that staff member(s) or governor(s) responsible for safeguarding are kept fully aware of their responsibilities, by attending relevant training and briefings
- letting staff, parents and pupils know how to voice their concerns
- responding to any allegations appropriately in accordance with appropriate school policies and procedures

## **Consultation and Information**

We have involved (and will continue to involve) all stakeholders (pupils, staff, parents and governors) in the preparation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.

- The head teacher's report to governors gives details of assessment analysis, including trends observed for race and gender. The report also includes any racist incidents, exclusions and complaints against the school. The head teacher reports on the progress of disability access work.
- We involve governors, parents, staff and children in the evaluation of the suitability of our curriculum and school grounds.
- The school council seek and represent the views of the children. We also consult all Key Stage 2 children through questionnaires.
- Our parents are consulted early in the year at parents evening with a questionnaire. We have an open door policy and parents feel welcomed into the school with any problem – no matter how small they feel their concern may be.
- Parents are offered meetings and workshops to learn about aspects of the school curriculum and school procedures. The most recent workshop was on anti-bullying.
- We provide written and spoken translation for parents as needed. Principal languages include Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri, Czech, Slovakian.

## **Publishing and raising awareness**

We recognise that our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. Under the Equality Act 2010, we recognise that from April 2012, as a school, we also have a "specific duty" to:

1. Publish sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty every four years, with an action plan review on at least an annual basis. This can include information on the effect that our school policies and practices have on protected groups.
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives in an accessible manner, to meet one or more aims of the general equality duty, and supporting the local authority in publishing relevant information to demonstrate compliance where necessary.

We publicise our policy by

- placing it on our website
- making it available on request to all stakeholders
- ensuring that all staff have access to the policy via the "o drive" on the school server
- providing a comprehensive induction for all admin and classroom staff, in which they are given key policies on a disc or memory stick. They are signposted to the full suite of policies on the "O" drive.
- Explaining the equality duties to lunchtime organisers.

## **Monitoring and evaluating the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy** **How will we Assess the success and impact of our Policy?**

We need to understand whether our policies and services are meeting everyone's needs and that anyone who needs to can get access to them. To do this we will test how we are doing at the moment and assess what can be done better in the future. This will be done annually. This information will enable us to take into account the

needs of different groups of people who share one or more of the protected characteristics defined by legislation.

We will consult with the local authority where necessary along with our staff and Governors and continue to provide relevant training based on our findings.

- We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Action Plan.
- We will report annually on our progress and performance.
- Our annual report will be shared with Governors and our School Improvement Partner.
- A summary will be provided for parents and published in our prospectus. Both will explain how the full report can be obtained.
- We will inform staff and pupils of our progress.
- The head and deputy head will take the lead in writing the annual report and making this available to any interested stakeholder.
- The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Action Plan and inform subsequent Equality and Community Cohesion Policies
- We want this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy to be a 'whole organisational' document that drives forward equality and achieves improved outcomes. We will therefore ensure that the Action Plan is an integral part of our School Improvement Plan, and as such, our progress will have regular oversight by the senior leadership team and the governing body.
- Information and data, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the action plans including information on the school population, workforce recruitment, retention and progression, special initiatives, progress at key stage levels and targets and future plans will be reported on to ensure effective monitoring.
- We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and Action Plan every three years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will again involve staff, pupils, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of the school community.
- The school has a procedure in place for recording, reporting and responding to racist incidents. The school will continue to comply with the Local Authority procedure for monitoring racist incidents so that the information can be analysed. This procedure is outlined fully in the policy on Dealing with Racist Incidents.
- We will identify our achievements and progress annually and highlight our good practice
- We will highlight annually where our practise can be improved
- We will review our key policies, functions and procedures annually.
- We will look at the effects of current policies, practices and procedures on disabled pupils, staff and parents or carers, boys and girls, men and women, and people from ethnic minorities. We aim to tackle any issues identified through the involvement of these groups, and to highlight any areas of good practice.

The following policies will be scrutinised in relation to our findings:

- *Admissions and Transfer*
- *Attendance*
- *Exclusions*
- *Curriculum*
- *Uniform*

- *National Healthy School Status*
- *Behaviour and Discipline*
- *Sports*
- *Anti-bullying policy*
- *School trips and visits*
- *Domestic violence and pastoral support*
- *EAL*
- *Prevent*
- *Dealing with racist incidents*
- *SEN policy*

## **Roles and responsibilities**

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and Action plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school, so that each individual knows what is expected of them. Promoting equality and preventing discrimination, victimisation and harassment is the responsibility of the whole school staff, including support staff. All who are associated with the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and community cohesion, and avoiding unfair discriminatory practices.

### **The Governing body will:**

- Ensure sure the school complies with all current equality legislation.
- Monitor the implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Community Cohesion and Action Plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation
- Receive and discuss regular equality and community cohesion reports on progress and performance
- Monitor achievement of equality targets
- Check that implementation of the policy and action plan achieves improved outcomes for equality and community cohesion and people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to the protected characteristics of disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- Monitoring equality impact assessments
- Support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- Inform and consult with parents about the policy
- Have one governor who takes on the role of designated governor responsible for equality and community cohesion monitoring the policy closely.

### **The headteacher will:**

- Provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- Ensure staff, pupils, parents/carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy, their roles and responsibilities in implementing it, and receive training and support in carrying these actions out.
- Monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Action plan
- Provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this policy
- Assess and monitor the impact of the policy through developing the action plan
- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents know about it
- Taking appropriate action in any cases of victimisation, harassment and discrimination in line with the school and LA guidance
- Report racist incident monitoring information to the LA on a termly basis
- Produce a report on progress for governor on an annual basis
- Deal with incidents of discrimination, victimisation or harassment, or nominate another senior member of staff to do this.

- Monitor progress and attainment of learners from different groups and communities
- Monitor recruitment and career progress of staff from different groups and communities
- Ensure that the school only contracts services with providers who have a commitment to equality and cohesion.

**The Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Drive forward implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and Action Plan
- Support staff to carry out their role in implementing this policy
- Provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- Ensure the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy is successfully promoted
- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.
- Assist in implementing reviews of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy as detailed in the School Improvement Plan
- One member of the senior management team will be identified as the co-ordinator for equality and community cohesion and will be involved in action planning, policy development and monitoring and evaluation

**The SENCO will:**

- Provide reasonable adjustment and support for disabled pupils.

**All staff will:**

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to:
  - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
  - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
  - tackle bias and stereotyping
  - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, victimisation and harassment and report these
- Highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities.
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society
- Reviewing and monitoring curriculum policies and planning in their own subject areas to ensure that equality is promoted

**All staff will also ensure that pupils are encouraged to:**

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to:
- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, victimisation and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.
- Work within the Rights and Responsibilities framework we have adopted as Rights Respecting School

### **Administrative, Ancillary, Supervisory and Support Staff**

- All staff will familiarise themselves with this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and know what their responsibilities are in ensuring that it is implemented

### **All our pupils are responsible for:**

- Treating others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination, victimisation or harassment
- Attending and engaging in their own learning as well as helping other pupils to learn
- Learning to treat each others with respect and report incidents of discrimination to an adult
- Working within the Rights and Responsibilities framework we have adopted as Rights Respecting School

### **All our parents and carers are responsible for:**

- Supporting our school in its implementation of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy
- Following the school policy through their own behaviour
- Ensuring their children attend and engage in the learning
- Inform staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur

### **Visitors and contractors are responsible for:**

- Acting in accordance with our equality policy

### **Breaches of the Policy**

Breaches of this Single Equality & Community Cohesion Policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teacher and Governing Body.

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the school because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation, they should report this without fail through the school's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance policy, as appropriate. Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report annually on complaints made and action taken as part of monitoring the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Polic.

