

SINGLE EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

Approved by:	Danielle Perryman	Date: 30/09/2024
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1. Rationale

We believe that all students and staff should be able to participate and share in the life of our school and community, value themselves and others, and recognise the strengths and richness of diversity.

This 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.

At Rossendale School we are committed to:

- Promoting equality through all aspects of school life.
- Challenging and eradicating discrimination of any form, including racist, sexist or homophobic bullying or discrimination of any form relating to an individual's disability.
- Promoting community cohesion at all levels
- Giving a high profile to rights and responsibilities by promoting human rights, justice and fairness throughout the curriculum and wider school community.
- Developing, implementing, monitoring and reporting equality work throughout the school community as part of our self – evaluation processes and school development.
- Working in partnership with, and consulting, students, parents, carers, staff and our wider community to develop good practice and lead the equality and inclusion agenda within our community.

2. Policy Statement

The school acknowledges and welcomes diversity among pupils, staff and visitors.

- We do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their sex, race, age, colour, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or physical or mental abilities.
- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all connected with the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.
- We will monitor the achievement of all pupils, continuing to close the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils to further raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching and learning.
- We will not tolerate discrimination – we will challenge all forms of bullying and stereotyping.
- We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit Rossendale School.

3. Specific Equality Areas

3.1 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

Rossendale 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 year 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.

3.2 Gender

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

The 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 our functions.

3.3 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

The school is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and wellbeing 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.

3.4 Pregnancy and Maternity

What do we mean by pregnancy and maternity?

Treating a woman (or a female student 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

The school is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and wellbeing 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 students or staff to ensure that they are not treated less favourably because they are pregnant or breastfeeding.

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

3.5 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

Rossendale School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and wellbeing 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.

3.6 Religion or Belief

Rossendale School is a non-denominational 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 (e.g. 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

The 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 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 students, 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, students 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.

We will continue to tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Keeping accurate records of all religion or belief groups, their backgrounds and needs and how the school responds to them.
- Deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and notify complainants of the outcomes and action taken.
- Encourage dialogue between students of different religions or belief groups.
- Prevent discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different religions or belief groups.

3.7 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

Rossendale 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, LGBTQ+ people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBTQ+ 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 LGB 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.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

4. Community Cohesion

What do we mean by Community Cohesion?

Rossendale 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.
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

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 is the process that should happen in all communities to ensure that different groups and individual people get on well together. It should also allow for new communities and existing communities to adapt and integrate with one another.

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

- The school community
- The community within which the school is located.

- The community of Britain
- The global community.

5. Teaching Learning and the Curriculum

At Rossendale School we expect pupils to respect others and value diversity, to develop the skills to take responsible action, and curriculum planning across all subject areas have highlighted opportunities to promote community cohesion. Opportunities have provided for learners to gain the confidence to play a part in their community.

Equality and excellence

We have ensured all pupils have opportunities to reach their full potential, removing variations in learning outcomes from different community groups.

Engagement and extended services.

The services we provide encourage families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships.

We will evidence our effectiveness by demonstrating:

- A widely shared sense of the contribution of different communities to a shared vision -(as far as is possible)
- 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 trust the school to act fairly.
- We have strong and positive relationships.

6. Safeguarding and Building Resilience

Rossendale 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 current Safeguarding policy 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, particularly 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 & 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, online safety and extreme political views.

Rossendale School is committed to:

- Establishing a single point of contact in terms of safeguarding.
- Assess risk of students being drawn into terrorism.
- Develop an action plan to reduce the risk.
- Train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism.
- Refer vulnerable people to Channel.
- Prohibit extremist speakers and events.
- Manage access to extremist material- ICT filters.
- Be confident about 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 our pupils by

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting, and

- Identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation and taking appropriate action in accordance with the schools 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) 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.

All staff at Rossendale School have regular Prevent training.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 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
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this policy.
- Assess and monitor the impact of the policy.
- Ensure the policy is readily available and that the 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.

7.2 The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Drive forward implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy
- 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

7.3 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 o 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: o promote equality, inclusion and good community relations.
 - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour.
 - tackle bias and stereotyping o work to promote anti-bullying strategies.
 - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, victimisation and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

7.4 All our Pupils are responsible for:

- Respecting and 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

- Treating each other with respect and reporting incidents of discrimination to an adult

7.5 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.
- Informing staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur

8. 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 Senior Leadership Team.

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 or Dignity at Work Policies, 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 Policy.

9. Monitoring

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy. 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 findings of our annual report will be used to update the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy 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.

10. Links with other school policies

School policies that link with, and have informed this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy include:

- SEN policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Admissions policy
- Local Offer + SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour and relationships Policy