

SLS Equalities Policy and Action Plan

Date of approval: December 2023

Date of review: December 2024



Educating through faith, hope and love.

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Introduction

St Luke's Church of England School is a school for the whole community. Our vision has Jesus' promise "*I came to give life—life in all its fullness*" at its heart (John 10:10). We believe that all children deserve an education of the highest quality in order to flourish and enjoy a life filled with meaning and purpose. Our children combine a care for others with a love for learning, and an appreciation of the importance of spiritual, mental and physical well-being. We serve local children, parents and the community within the context of Christian belief and practice, and aim to create an environment where everyone is valued equally.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach to equality embraces the following 7 key principles:

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages, which people may face in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that

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improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the Policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age, marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or “general duty”. This requires all public organisations, including schools, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools, to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1: Check list of key equality considerations for school staff and governors

Appendix 2: St Luke’s CE School Equalities Objectives and Action Plan

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, self-evaluation, school website and newsletters.

Eliminating Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation we:

- Take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.

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- Are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment Duty for disabled pupils, designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- Ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- Take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the school.
- Actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment that champions respect for all.
- Ensure our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-based Bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief (for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia), travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

We treat all bullying incidents equally and seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

We review this data termly and take any necessary action to reduce incidents.

Equality of Opportunity

To advance equality of opportunity between different groups:

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability.

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- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps.
- We collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupil's achievement, or that seeks to define their potential as learners.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- We implement an 'Accessibility Plan' designed to increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum, improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. Our current Accessibility Plan can be found on the school website and paper copies are available on request from the school office.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations:

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship, and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, and we avoid stereotyping.
- We promote our whole-school Christian Vision and values to establish an ethos that robustly challenges prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people

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- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events where appropriate.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evening, parent workshops and any other forum to gather views.
- Analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and INSET.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole-school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Analyse issues raised in annual reviews, Individual Education Plan meetings, or in mentoring sessions.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

Publishing, Monitoring & Reviewing Equality Objectives

Our school's priorities are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

Our Equalities Objectives December 2023 – 2027 are:

- **To ensure that staff with mental and physical health needs feel supported by the school and ensure that any disadvantages they experience are addressed.**
- **To ensure that pupils entitled to Pupil Premium can experience the same rich and fulfilling educational opportunities as their peers.**
- **To ensure that children who have English as an additional language or SEND are equipped with a rich vocabulary and are able to express themselves confidently.**
- **To ensure a high level of respect for all cultures, religions, family experiences and backgrounds.**

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups.

We produce an Equality Action Plan (see Appendix 1) that shows how we will achieve our objectives.

We review and update our equality objectives every year. We evaluate the success in meeting these objectives in the 'progress summary', which is completed annually. This is reported to governors and published on the school website.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide guidance, information, and, where relevant, training to enable them to do this.

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Governing body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a responsibility for Equalities. Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the equality objectives and evaluate the success of the Equality Policy school's equalities work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys).

Headteacher and Leadership Team

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- Support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Key contacts

Ms J Iwanicki (Head teacher)

Mrs J Galton (SENDCo)

Mr C Somorjay (Lead governor: Equalities & Inclusion)

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law and Safer Recruitment.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

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- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receives appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Disseminating the Policy

This Equality Policy and Equality Action Plan is available on the school website and paper copies are available on request from the School Office.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

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APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies, pupil voice and the school council
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and whole-school assemblies
- The school takes part in annual events such as Anti-Bullying Week to raise awareness of issues around differenced, diversity and inclusion
- The school environment is as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school, and issues such as language barriers are considered
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information
- We aim to make the Governing Body increasingly representative of the community it serves. Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.

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Appendix B: St Luke's CE School Equalities Objectives (December 2023 – 2027) and Equalities Action Plan

Equality Objective	Actions	Who is responsible?	How will the impact be measured?	Progress Summary Next Review: December 2024
To ensure that staff with mental and physical health needs feel supported by the school and ensure that any disadvantages they experience are addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-door policy so that staff can share any concerns they have about their physical and mental health with a member of SLT • Weekly well-being open surgery so that staff can talk in confidence to the Well-Being Lead, and be sign-posted to further help and support • Promote Education Support and Place to Be as free, confidential resource for all staff • Work with Occupational Health to ensure that staff are medically fit to work and reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure a successful and sustained return to work. 	SLT Well-being lead HT /Well-being lead HT	Staff are approaching SLT and Well-Being Lead when issues arise. Staff are accessing outside support if they wish to. Staff with identified needs are able to fulfil the professional standards of their role. Results of Staff Survey.	
To ensure that pupils entitled to pupil premium can experience the same rich and fulfilling educational opportunities as their peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Pupil Premium grant to offer one free club per term, and offer the Year 6 school journey at a highly discounted price for children entitled to pupil premium funding 	HT/ Office Manager HT/SLT	PP children are accessing afterschool clubs.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer trips and in-school enrichment activities on a voluntary donation basis • Have an open-door policy for parents to discuss any concerns they may have over payments and to work together to find a solution. 		<p>All children are participating in wider activities. Parents and Carers do not report cost as a barrier to children's participation.</p> <p>Results of Parent Survey.</p>	
To ensure that children who have English as an additional language or SEND are equipped with a rich vocabulary and are able to express themselves confidently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that key vocabulary is noted and taught • model high quality, precise language in all teaching and set high expectation for the language children use to express their own thoughts and ideas • pre-teach vocabulary where appropriate • make high-quality texts available to children for independent, group whole class reading; 	<p>Class teachers</p> <p>All staff Class teachers/ TAs</p> <p>Class teachers/ English Lead</p>	Monitoring of planning during work scrutiny, learning walks, observations.	
To ensure a high level of respect for all cultures, religions, family experiences and backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote our Christian Vision of care for others and spiritual and mental wellbeing • teach the LDBS RE curriculum which explores the major world faiths and actively promote how to disagree well when talking about beliefs 	<p>SLT</p> <p>Class teachers; RE Lead</p>	<p>Vision evident on website and in policies and procedures.</p> <p>Work scrutiny and lesson observations</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure that books and visuals are diverse and representative of our school community• commit to a zero-tolerance of all forms of bullying and harassment by following the school Behaviour and AntiBullying policy.	All staff All staff/ SLT Governors	School and class libraries are stocked appropriately; resources being used are evident in learning walks and lesson observations. Incidents of bullying and harassment are dealt with, recorded and reported in accordance with the school policy. Incidents reported to and scrutinised by Governors.	
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Complaints Procedure

If anyone in the school community feels that this policy is not being followed then they should raise the matter first with the Headteacher and, if concerns persists, with the Chair of Governors who will facilitate the appropriate action, which may include an investigation. If there is a formal complaint, then the school's complaints procedure will be followed.

Copies of this policy will be available in the staff handbook, from the school office and on the school website.

This policy has been agreed by the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

Headteacher signature:

Print name:

Date:

Chair of Governors' signature:

Print name:

Date: