



## **Shepherds Down School Equalities Policy** (including Equalities Information and Objectives)

### **Shepherds Down Equality Statement**

Shepherds Down School welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy.

### **National and Legal Context**

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

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

### **School Context**

Shepherds Down School is a maintained community special school serving the needs of primary school aged pupils in Winchester, Eastleigh and the surrounding area. At our last OFSTED Inspection in March 2017 we were rated as Good.

#### **Pupils**

All of our pupils on roll will have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). It is therefore inherent that all of our children on role will have significant learning difficulties with some children also having physical difficulties or life limiting conditions.

The school is based in an affluent area just to the south of Winchester but our catchment demographic is diverse. As at February 2022 we have 160 pupils on roll, 20 % of these children are of a non-white British background. Since the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen a marked increase in the number of children registered for Free School Meals, rising from 19% in 2019 to 32% (51 children). We also have a continuing small cohort of service children and children from a travelling background.

## **Staff**

As at February 2022 we have a staff cohort of 135 serving the needs of the children. The Senior Leadership Team consists of the Headteacher, The Deputy Head and 2 Assistant Headteachers. As at February 2022, there are 18 classes across the 2 Key Stages, each with a FTE of 1 teacher who is supported by a minimum of 3 Learning Support Assistants.

The staff mainly consists of women, and the ethnic profile is in line with that of the surrounding area. Our recruitment policy does not and is not allowed to discriminate against any gender, race or religion. Our staffing profile is a reflection of the type of employment we offer i.e. school time, term time contracts so the school will always be an attractive employment option for people who need to work around the needs of school aged children.

## **Principles**

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

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

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

### **2. We recognise and respect difference**

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

- Disability – we note that reasonable adjustments may need to be made
- Gender (including transgender) – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs
- Religion and belief – we note that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with
- Ethnicity and race – we note that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference
- Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

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

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

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

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

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

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

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

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

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

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement. As we are school that employs less than 150 people we are not bound to publish any equality information with regards to our staff.

9. 9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix B to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

### **Application of the principles within this policy statement:**

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

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

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

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

### **Roles and responsibilities**

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

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

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

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

**Date approved by the Governing Body: March 2022**

**Date for policy review: March 2023**

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

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

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

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- *parent questionnaires*
- *involvement of the student council*
- *staff survey*
- *contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics*
- *contact with the local community and disability organisations*

The most recent parent questionnaire in June 2021 had a response rate of 32%, with 92% of respondents stating that their child was happy to come to school. 98% of parents would recommend the school to other parents.

### Pupil-related data

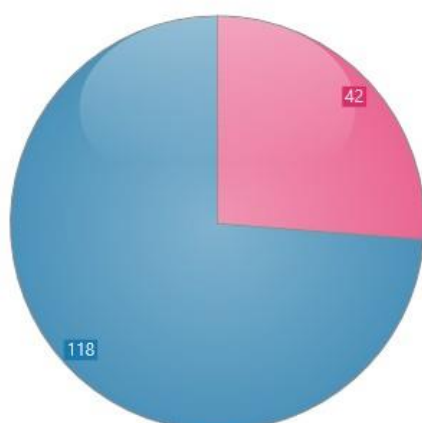
Whole school attendance for the academic year 2020-21 was 84.39%, this was for the whole academic year and whilst the majority of children attended during lockdown, this would have been on a part time basis with some children not attending at all through either their clinical vulnerability or parental preference to keep their child at home.

In the academic year 2020-21 there were no fixed term exclusions.

There were no recorded incidents of bullying or racism

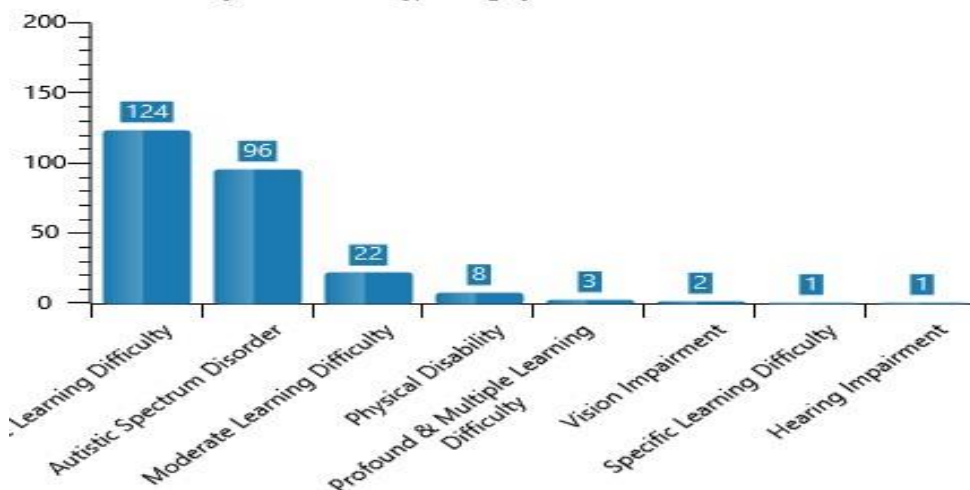
### Pupils by Gender September 2021

Student Total by Gender  
A count of students by gender



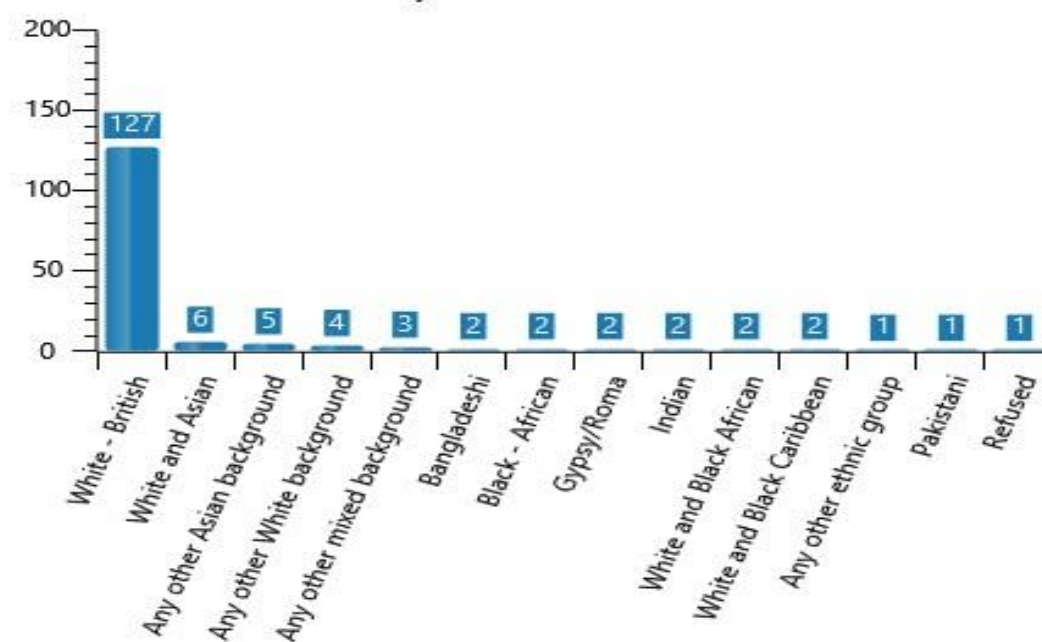
### Students by SEN Need Type Category

A count of students by their SEN need type category



### Student Totals by Ethnicity

A count of students with each ethnicity



### Staff data

As a school we have an employee roll of less than 150 so we are not required to publish information in relation to our staff. However in line with statutory guidance we do maintain information on the characteristics of our workforce and this then feeds into our equality objectives and those of Hampshire County Council.

**Date of publication of this appendix:**

**February 2022**

**Date for review and re-publication:**

**February 2024**

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Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

### Objective 1:

To ensure that our school is accessible as it can be for all children irrespective of their learning or physical needs.

### Objective 2:

Any enlargement of the school will consider the needs of the children who will use the facilities either now or in the future.

### Objective 3

To ensure that every child receives an appropriate, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.

### Objective 4

To address any gaps in relation to teaching of sex and relationships, in particular developing appropriate teaching material for the least able children, where appropriate.

### Objective 5

In the event of a prolonged school closure all pupils will have access to a home learning programme appropriate to the individual's abilities outside of the school environment.

### Objective 6

The well-being of all members of the school community is paramount in our ability to achieve our objectives. Staff members and pupils will have access to a varied tool kit to help them look after their well-being and ensure that Shepherds Down is an environment where everyone thrives and resilience and fulfilment is the golden thread that runs through the school.

**Date of publication: March 2022**

**Date for review and re-publication: March 2023**