



## Leigh St Mary's Church of England Primary School

### Equality Policy and Scheme February 2023

### Review February 2026

## Our School Mission Statement

**INSPIRE** To be the best that I can be

**BELIEVE** To believe I can make a difference for good in this world

**ACHIEVE** To know I have the roots to grow and the wings to fly

At Leigh St Mary's Church of England Primary School we promote a life-long love of learning. Through enriching, exciting learning opportunities and a creative curriculum, children are given the foundations to flourish. Our Christian values are at the heart of our school and provide us with a culture of happiness, respect and trust.

We aim to promote a sense of belonging within a warm, nurturing environment where children feel safe and valued. We celebrate cultural diversity and believe that every child should have the opportunity to be the best that they can be.

Through our encouragement of good manners, kindness and friendship we aim to ensure our children display the values of good citizenship. We hope to instil in our children an 'I can' attitude and to provide our children with the tools to succeed in an ever changing world.

*Colossians 2 Verses 6 and 7*

*As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so continue to live in him. Keep your roots deep in him and have your lives built on him. Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught. And always be thankful.*

## THE THREE DIAMOND RULES

(Diamond because they should last forever)

- ❖ *Show respect and good manners at all times.*
- ❖ *Follow instructions with thought and care.*
- ❖ *Care for everyone and everything.*

Our Diamond Rules set out our high expectations for **everyone's behaviour** (pupils, staff, governors, parents, visitors etc.) and conduct and are constantly referred to when discussing desired behaviours and attitudes. Alongside the school's Christian Values, these rules form part of the core of the school's moral code and therefore link with our commitment to equality and inclusion.

### Rationale

Leigh St Mary's is a fully inclusive, church school devoted to the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. 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.

### Overview

The Equality Act which came into place on 1 October 2010 brought together the duties previously contained within our Equality and Diversity Plan. The Equality Act covers all seven of the equality strands (or protected characteristics): age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In our school we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the school community and its life, all will be treated equally.

### Legal Framework

- We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity (known as protected characteristics).
- We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
- 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.

## Objectives

- To ensure that all our children have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To ensure that teaching, learning and curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged because of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.
- To ensure that within the school budget adequate funding is provided to underpin this policy and that intervention, positive action and preventative action is funded where needed.

## Policy Statement

**In accordance with our mission statement and school values we pledge:**

- ✓ to respect the equal human rights of all our pupils;
- ✓ to educate them about equality;
- ✓ to respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community.

**We will assess our current school practices ("Equality Impact Assessment") and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to:**

- ✓ ethnicity,
- ✓ religion or belief,
- ✓ socio-economic background,
- ✓ gender and gender identity,
- ✓ disability,
- ✓ sexual orientation,
- ✓ age.

**We will promote community cohesion at school, local, national and global levels, comparing our school community to its local and national context and implementing all necessary actions in relation to:**

- ✓ ethnicity,
- ✓ religion or belief,
- ✓ socio-economic background.

**We want to do more by incorporating the following into our scheme statement:**

- ✓ The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse pupil performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any disparities which are identified will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.

- ✓ We encourage pupils to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour.
- ✓ This school believes that self-assessment is a teaching-learning strategy, and we will provide all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.
- ✓ All pupils, wherever possible, participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school.
- ✓ Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.
- ✓ We have procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline
- ✓ We make provision for leave of absence for religious observance, for staff as well as pupils.
- ✓ We monitor parental involvement and have strategies to raise participation of underrepresented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all.
- ✓ Steps are taken to ensure the school's admission process is fair and equitable to all pupils.
- ✓ Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The equality objectives in Section 10 below address our duties under current equality legislation, up to and including the Equality Act 2010. They also relate to our school procedure for recording incidents involving pupils in schools. The access plan in Section 11 below addresses our duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001. The community cohesion plan in Section 12 below addresses our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

The following statement outlines both the data and current issues relating to ethnicity, religion/belief and socio-economic factors. In examining the school's context, it relates closely to the points identified in school self-evaluation documents. It demonstrates the awareness of the governors and their community partners of how the school community compares with the wider community, both locally and nationally. It therefore forms the basis for planning the actions in Section 12 below to promote community cohesion.

### **Ethnicity/culture context of the school (local and national)**

It is a community where all are welcomed, valued and affirmed. Other faith communities participate positively in school activities and this helps our children to demonstrate an awareness of community cohesion and to think of others and how they contribute to our community. We

have adapted to the changing context both locally and nationally and we are continually improving our understanding of our duties in relation to equality of all pupils in school.

### **Religion/belief context of the school (local and national)**

We aspire for our school community to be a community of togetherness; one that is enriched in love, patience and forgiveness. Leigh St Mary's Primary School is characterised by its distinctive Christian Foundation and our Mission Statement encompasses our beliefs about how we should live our lives and how we should instil in our children core moral values. Positive relationships exist between church and the school. Schemes of work are of high quality and reflect Christian foundation whilst at same time giving due weight to other faiths.

### **Socio-economic context of the school (local and national)**

We strive to create positive examples within school that will go on to promote to our families a caring, tolerant, respectful and inclusive society to bring about community cohesion. Our pupils will develop first-rate attitudes towards community cohesion as a result of varied content of curriculum. We have a systematic approach to collecting, analysing and interpreting data. This allows us to find useful evidence on how we ensure that activities are 'open' to all our pupils, not just the disadvantaged.

### **Current issues affecting cohesion at school, (local and national level)**

At Leigh St Mary's we realise the importance of improving outcomes for all groups that the Equality Duty covers. Our aim is to create an Equality Scheme which reflects our school's Christian ethos and commitment to promote equality. This will require on-going review and assessment to gain a clear sense of the strengths and weaknesses in carrying out our equality duties, how to build on them and the impact on becoming a truly inclusive school. By training staff and governors on ways of further promoting community cohesion we can overcome some of the issues which affect us now and possibly in future. Community cohesion can have a dramatic positive effect on achieving outcomes. We believe that Leigh St Mary's truly prepares all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Two named governors will take the lead (Mrs S Howard and Mr Ashley Turner) but the governors as a whole are responsible for:**

- ✓ drawing up, publishing and implementing the school's equality objectives
- ✓ making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation; and
- ✓ making sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed

- ✓ monitoring progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually

**The head teacher is responsible for:**

- ✓ making sure steps are taken to address the school's stated equality objectives;
- ✓ making sure the equality, access and community cohesion plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them; they are available from the school upon request and will be published on the school website further to annual reviews.
- ✓ producing regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;
- ✓ making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out; and
- ✓ taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents.
- ✓ enabling reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, regarding students, staff, parents / carers, governors and visitors to the school.

**All staff are responsible for:**

- ✓ promoting equality and community cohesion in their work;
- ✓ avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone;
- ✓ fostering good relations between groups; and
- ✓ dealing with prejudice-related incidents;
- ✓ being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- ✓ taking up training and learning opportunities;
- ✓ more positive attitudes towards diversity in society and reduction of prejudice;
- ✓ overall school improvement including better learning and academic standards;
- ✓ improved behaviour and relationships;
- ✓ improvement of pupil self-esteem.

The Headteacher is responsible overall for dealing with reports of prejudice-related incidents and reporting to the Governing Body but on a day to day basis, Mrs Wilkinson, Pastoral Support Manager, will oversee any incidents and take the appropriate action. Visitors and contractors are also responsible for following the relevant school policy.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

**This section outlines our process for training and development in relation to equality and cohesion in terms of professional responsibilities as well as statutory requirements.**

- ✓ As a school, we have a general duty to promote community cohesion, togetherness and bonding exhibited by the members of a community. The School Leadership team recognise

their statutory requirement to pay 'due regard' to the promotion of equality for all people and in both general and specific duties.

- ✓ Equality Objectives – to be set and published, then reviewed regularly and replaced after 3 years
- ✓ It is our duty to ensure other members of staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive training and support to carry these out. We consider our school community to be well developed spiritually and our core values are firmly embedded into the life of the school highlighting the importance of respecting the rights of others and of personal and collective responsibility. Everyone already uses the language of rights, respect and responsibility.
- ✓ Ongoing development on dealing with prejudice-relating incidents, being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping and providing training and learning opportunities for all staff, should be a priority to uncover any gaps in knowledge of the Equality Act.
- ✓ Staff should be clear on what they have to do and how to do it, along with the type of evidence required in order to carry out their duties under the Equality Act. 6.

## PUBLICATION AND REVIEW

This Equality Scheme fulfils statutory requirements under the terms of legislation referred to above. As it is a public document, the school governors publish it by making it available on request and also making it available on the school website.

- ✓ Equality Objectives – to be set and published, then reviewed regularly and replaced after 3 years.
- ✓ The scheme will be kept under regular review for three years and then replaced in Autumn Term 2026

## REPORTING ON PROGRESS AND IMPACT

Leigh St Mary's continually monitors progress and evaluates impact in various ways, reporting via different means to reach all audiences. This ensures outcomes are in line with expectations and our statutory duties are being met. Evidence will also be kept of the impact of our actions to promote community cohesion, in respect of ethnicity, religion or belief and socio-economic background.

## HOW WE CONDUCT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This section outlines our process for monitoring the potential impact of school practice in terms of:

- ethnicity,
- religion or belief,
- socio-economic background,
- gender and gender identity,

- disability,
- sexual orientation, and
- age.

**The outcomes we wish to achieve:**

- ✓ To ensure we pay due regard to our equality duties for all protected groups by having effective policies and practices in place.
- ✓ Increased staff awareness and training, resulting in improvements in teaching and learning and hence achievement.
- ✓ Positive impact on attendance.
- ✓ Increased collaboration with experienced multi-agency teams e.g. EMAS
- ✓ Improved administrative practices with regard admission to school e.g. induction procedures which identify those children or families with protected characteristics.
- ✓ Recognisable actions and achievements which show signs of elimination of any discrimination, harassment and victimisation and therefore advancing equality of opportunity. Equality objectives identified by this process should be included in the three-year plan in Section 10 below.

## HOW WE CHOSE OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

**Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:**

- ✓ from the equality impact assessments listed above,
- ✓ from school, local and national data
- ✓ from the teams of professionals who support pupils within school such as TESS, EMAS, Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy and CAMHS
- ✓ from parents requiring day to day support from Pastoral Manager
- ✓ from evaluating the knowledge of our staff and school community.
- ✓ from discussion with all stakeholders

At Leigh St Mary's we aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity for members of identified groups
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- foster excellent relations between different groups in terms of:
  - ethnicity,
  - religion or belief,
  - socio-economic background,
  - gender and gender identity, o disability,
  - sexual orientation
  - age

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2024-2025 (to be kept under regular review)

To further strengthen the support we give to our local community and cohesion by continuing our involvement with Leigh Neighbours Project.

To continue to positively develop our wider curriculum to ensure children experience a varied and diverse curriculum that challenges stereotypes and discrimination of any form and encourages pupils to develop an open and free-thinking mindset.

To fully establish a successful Nurture provision in school that effectively supports our most vulnerable SEND pupils within a loving, caring and safe environment that allows them to reach their full potential both academically and personally.

To enhance the support package available to families who have attendance difficulties by working on further strategies to develop even stronger parent partnerships so that any issues preventing pupils from achieving 96%+ attendance are swiftly overcome.

### Useful Links:

The Equality Act – Advice for Schools:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality Act Advice Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)

Equality and Diversity – Wigan Council:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Equality-and-Diversity/Index.aspx>