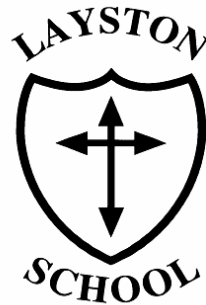




Layston C of E First School



Loving to learn, Learning to love. For every child a chance to shine

School Equality Scheme

Reviewed
Review due

Nov 2023
Nov 2024

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on autumn 23.

It is due for review in autumn 2024 (up to 1 year from the above date) by the Governing Body.

Signature *Adele McMurrrough*

Date Nov 23

Head Teacher

Signature *Colin Wilson*

Date Nov 23

Chair of Governors



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1: *Vision and Values*

Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

We aim to provide an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We aim to be a community who warmly welcome all and who create a stimulating environment for learning through a lively, creative curriculum - a place where every child will have the support they need.

We aim to:

- Develop an understanding of the Christian faith, and to foster spiritual growth.
- Provide all our children with a safe and welcoming school in which learning is an enjoyable experience.
- Encourage children to be curious and creative, to think for themselves and to develop enquiring, questioning minds which thrive on challenge and which aim high.
- Develop a love of learning and a determination to try their best, and to become life-long learners.
- Give children the confidence to embrace change and to engage with technological advances.
- Promote good health through a rich and varied programme of sporting activities and through a commitment to healthy eating.
- Provide an environment where children feel good about themselves and optimistic about the future. A place where caring for and supporting others is second nature and where good manners are a given.
- Encourage children to value everyone and show respect for all members of the community whatever their race, gender identification, sexuality or creed.
- Promote equality and tackle discrimination. 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.
- Provide an ethos where children feel that their voice can be heard and that by making a contribution they can make a difference and make changes for the better.
- Foster concern about the world they live in and to take pride in their school and their local environment, caring about the world that they will leave for future generations.
- Work in partnership with parents in the education of their children and encourage their involvement and support.

In fulfilling the legal obligations in Section 3, we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, 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 or non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same, but rather giving everyone what they need.

Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take into account differences in life-experiences, outlooks and backgrounds. We will be mindful of and sensitive to the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls/women and boys/men and those identifying as non-binary, are recognised and valued;
- Religion, belief or faith background;
- Sexuality.

Principle 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 towards people with disabilities, good relations between differently-abled people, and an absence of harassment of people with disabilities;
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys/men and girls/women and those identifying as non-binary, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example, in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

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

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:

- differently abled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men, and those identifying as non-binary.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We consult and involve:

- differently abled people
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men, and those identifying as non-binary.
- people from a range of sexual orientations.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- differently abled people
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men, and those identifying as non-binary.
- people from a range of sexual orientations.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7).

The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

2: School Context

The characteristics of our school

Layston Church of England VC First School is situated in a rural setting on the eastern edge of Buntingford. There are 147 pupils on roll (PAN 150) and children are taught in single age classes. Our school is popular and enjoys an excellent reputation locally and with the significant expansion in housing in Buntingford within the last few years Layston remains oversubscribed. Pupils are admitted to Reception in a single intake in September five and move on to middle school at the end of Year 4. All of our pupils live in the vicinity of the school which is one of private and local authority housing.

Buntingford is an area of very low ethnic diversity. The main ethnic group at Layston is white British at 89% with 2% of children having English as an additional language. Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' Christian, with some from practising Christian families. 43.5% of our pupils are Christian and 34% are recorded as having no religion, 18% refused or did not identify a religion and 0.6% Muslim. We have excellent links with our local Church - St Peter's and the incumbent, the Rev. Kirsty Wainwright, plays an important role in the Christian life of the school.

Our pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds and the number of our pupil premium has been on the increase each year. In this current academic year (2023-2024) we have 18 pupils eligible for pupil premium and two post looked after children which is 12% of the number of pupils on roll. We have 25 pupils on the special needs register which is 17% of the total number of pupils on roll.

We have a well-established Forest School which each year group attends for half a day. Forest School is led by trained practitioners and the learning is further developed as part of the curriculum in class. Forest School is a unique way of building independence, self-esteem and a positive attitude towards learning in our children as they explore and experience the natural world for themselves with opportunities to learn valuable life skills such as communication, collaboration and resourcefulness.

We have a Breakfast Club (7.30am - 8.45am) and After School Club (3.15pm - 6.00pm) which are run on the site by Buntings, an independent provider. Since January 2014 Buntings has been delivering provision for 2 year olds enabling the school to provide 'one stop drop' wrap around care from 7pm - 6pm Monday to Friday. In addition, an independent pre-school (3-4 year olds) also runs on the premises. We work closely with our providers and many of the children take up places in our Reception class.

Characteristic	Total	Breakdown (number and %)
Number of pupils 2023	147	85 Female = 57.8% 62 Male = 42.2%
Number of teachers 2023	9	8 Female = 86% 1 Male = 14%
TA's /MSA's	17	17 Female = 100%
Admin staff	2	2 Female = 100%
Site manager	1	1 Male = 100%
Number of governors 2023	12	10 Female = 83% 2 Male = 17%
Religious character		Church of England Voluntary Controlled
Attainment <u>on entry</u> EYFS 2023	30 16 F 14 M	50% overall, of which 13% male and 37% female, are within A.R.E. in all 7 areas of learning.
Mobility of school population		Low
Pupils eligible for FSM 2023 (including Ever-6's)	18 (12%)	13 Female = 72% 5 Male = 28%
Deprivation factor 2023	18	Pupil Premium Grant
Disabled staff 2023	0	0%

Disabled pupils (SEND) 2023	0	0%
Disabled pupils (no SEN) 2022	0	0%
BME pupils 2023	5	3.4%
BME staff 2023	1	0.6%
Pupils who speak English as an additional language 2023	5	3.4%
Average attendance rate 2021-22	91%	Boys = 91% Girls = 91.4%
Significant partnerships, extended provision, etc.		HIP Educational Psychologist Speech and Language Therapist SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties) Base Rivers ESC Amwell View Outreach Behaviour and Attendance Support Team Rib Valley Local Schools Partnership Family Support worker NE Herts School Sports Partnership Friends of Rib Valley Schools NE Herts Small School's Alliance School Nurse Service
Awards, accreditations, specialist status		Marjory Boxall Nurture Group Accreditation Award Anti-Bullying Accreditation Healthy Schools Eco Green Flag Award Forest School Level 3 accreditation Sports Kite Mark Gold and Silver HQS Active Mark

Current situation

The standard procedures and processes of our school – disability:

Our SEND and inclusion policy identify ways in which children with special educational needs and/or disabilities in school are to be assessed, supported and included fully in school life. Our accessibility plan notes that staff will monitor pupil needs and address any inequalities in provision. As our school is set on a hill, there are issues with access for people who have mobility issues. Our office and main hall and visitor toilet are accessible and we would make reasonable adjustments in order to support a child with a motor disability in school. Plans have been drawn up to modify access to the building at the side of the site which currently can only be accessed through a series of steps. Governors are pursuing funding options as part of the SDP.

We monitor the progress of the children on the SEND register throughout the year to ensure that appropriate provision is being accessed, that they are on track to reach their targets and identify any areas where we could improve our support and service. All SEND children are closely monitored through the development of chronologies and a graduated response to SEND targets.

We work with parents and outside agencies in order to support the progress of all children.

The standard procedures and processes of our school - gender

We monitor the standards and achievements of boys and girls. We note difference and aim to provide for the needs of each group. We track our children's free choice in EYFS to ensure that all children access all areas of the curriculum.

Our curriculum challenges gender stereotypes e.g. example mixed sports teams. No child is prevented from accessing any part of the curriculum because of their gender. Our comprehensive SMSC curriculum (evidencing British Values, character education and wellbeing) encourages and rewards children for valuing diversity, acceptance and respect for all.

The standard procedures and processes of our school - race

Our culturally diverse curriculum gives children an understanding about different cultures and different faiths. We provide good role models to ensure that all cultures are respected. We monitor the standards and achievements of all minority ethnic groups to ensure they make the expected progress, actions will be taken if underachievement is noted.

The standard procedures and processes of our school - community cohesion

We view the school as a significant part of the local community. We support various groups within the community such as preschool provision, the elderly and the church. We have strong links with other schools and with support service e.g. school nurse, EP.

We have a curriculum that provides learning about different faiths. The staff work hard to include children from different faiths into school life, where this is not possible i.e. when the parent does not want the children to be involved in Christmas activities, we work closely with the parents to ensure we do not go against their wishes.

3: Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

General Duty under the Equality Act 2010:

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties require schools to:

- Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- To set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils and adults from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:

- age (for staff only)
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender (sex) and gender identity and reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation

Disability

At Layston C of E First School we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Community Cohesion

Community Cohesion supports good practice in educating pupils about equality and diversity. It contributes to the school's efforts to provide a broad, balanced curriculum.

4: Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

Chain of accountability

The Board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

Commitment to implementation

The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively.

Every 6 months, staff will report to the Headteacher on actions and progress.

Every 12 months there will be a report on equality and diversity to the Governors' meeting.

All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

Responsibility for	Key person
Single equality scheme	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Disability equality (including bullying)	Susie Betley - SENDCo/DHT
SEND/INCo (including bullying incidents)	Susie Betley - SENDCo/DHT
Accessibility	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Gender equality (including bullying)	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Race equality (including racist incidents)	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Equality and diversity in curriculum content	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Equality and diversity in pupil achievement	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Equality and diversity - behaviour	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Participation in all aspects of school life	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Impact assessment	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Stakeholder consultation	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Policy review	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher
Communication and publishing	Adele McMurrrough - Headteacher

Commitment to review

The school equality scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes as well as being updated annually. Following this regular impact assessment, the whole equality scheme will be reviewed annually.

Commitment to publish

At Layston C of E First School we will publish information annually.

Equality information will be available on the school website www.layston@herts.sch.uk. We will publish the following information:

Evidence of staff training on the Equality Act 2010

- Copies of policies, for example the behaviour policy or anti-bullying policy, where the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct is expressly noted
- Attainment data which shows how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Aspects of the curriculum which explore different cultures and promotes understanding of different religions
- Involvement with the local communities
- Links with other schools in the UK and abroad which enable pupils to exchange experiences with children from different backgrounds
- Initiatives to explore and improve relationships between different groups of pupils within the school community

Commitment to action

Governors will:	
Policy development	Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies
Policy implementation	Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
Behaviour	Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils Congratulate examples of good practice from the school and among individual staff and pupils Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
Public sector duties	Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties (and ensuring the provision of 'returns' to the local authority)
Headteacher and senior staff will:	
Policy development	Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies

	Creating opportunities for pupils and staff to share their comments, suggestions and feedback, ensuring that all voices are heard
Policy implementation	Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders Ensure that staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies Oversee the effective implementation of the policies Hold staff accountable for effective policy implementation
Behaviour	Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils Highlight good practice from staff and pupils Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
Public sector duties	Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively
All staff (teaching & non-teaching) will:	
Policy development	Contribute to consultations and reviews Raise issues with line managers which could contribute to policy review and development
Policy implementation	Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils
Behaviour	Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
Public sector duties	Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme
All pupils will:	
Policy development	Have the opportunity to contribute to consultations and reviews through Talk Circles and pupil voice interviews

Policy implementation	Be made awareness of the relevant parts of the school's current Equality Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and E Safety Policy through class and school rules and Talk Circle discussions
Behaviour	Be expected to abide by class and school rules Be aware of a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
All parents/carers will:	
Policy development	Have the opportunity to contribute to consultations and reviews
Policy implementation	Be made awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures
Behaviour	Sign the school's Home-School Agreement. This includes a commitment to: Supporting the school's Behaviour and E Safety Policies Ensuring that their child attends regularly and punctually Supporting the school's policy of celebrating diversity, respecting difference and promoting equal opportunities
Public sector duties	Have the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme

5: Engagement

Involving our learners, parents/carers and others

Engagement - Participation and Involvement

Our school is committed to encouraging everyone to contribute to the development and review of all policies and practices affecting the life of the school and its impact within the wider community. We welcome the participation and involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities.

We have involved staff, pupils, parents and others with particular interests in the development of this scheme.

All pupils have the opportunity to discuss a variety of issues during our regular Talk Circle sessions. The agenda for these sessions always reinforces our aims and values and can be responsive to current issues e.g. needs of vulnerable pupils.

Through our values education programme we explore a different value each half term both in assemblies and in the classroom. These values have included Community and Friendship, Love and Compassion, Wisdom and Justice.

When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will continue to consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions - parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community - and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations. Evidence of this engagement will be included in the published material showing how the duty has been addressed.

6: Using information - Equality Impact Assessment, data and other information

Evaluating the impact in terms of the outcomes

2023 EYFS, Phonic Screening and Key Stage 1 End of Year Results

(Source: School tracking data)

63.3% of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) = awarded achieving at least age related expectation in the first 5 areas of learning.

National Average GLD for 2023= 67.3% Herts Average = 67.7%

Area	Layston	National	Herts	East Herts
C&L	90	79.7	81.2	81.8
PSED	86.7	83.3	83.4	84.5
PD	83.3	85.2	86	85.9
Literacy	66.7	69.8	70.8	70.4
Maths	83.3	77.2	78.7	79.4
UW	90	80.3	81.3	82.4
EAD	90	85	86.1	86.9
GLD	63.3	67.3	67.7	66.6

Year 1 Phonics Assessment Summer 23

	Layston	National	Herts	East Herts
Phonics screening	58.6	78.9	79.4	78.7

Key Stage 1 (SATs) results summer 2023

EXS	Layston	National	Herts	East Herts
Reading	75	68.3	69.4	69.5
Writing	60.7	60.1	60.8	60.3
Maths	71.4	70.4	70.6	71.6
Science	82.1	78.7	79.4	79.9
RWM	57.1	56	56.4	56.2
RWMS	57.1	55.7	56.2	56.1

Summary

Standards of attainment in RWM at KS1 for most pupils are slightly above national averages and progress is very good for almost all pupils. There are no significant issues associated with minority or vulnerable groups and any anomalies can be explained by the particular barriers identified with individual children within the cohort.

GLD results are broadly in line with national averages and have increased by 13.3% on last years outcomes. We continue to focus on developing communication and language and PSE opportunities within the EYFS and have signed up for the Terrific Talkers project this year. Phonics screening result is lower than in previous years. This is largely due to the cohort (only 50% achieving GLD in 2022). Reading fluency is a focus on our SDP and we continue to develop writing through working closely with teaching and learning advisers from county. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.

- We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of mechanisms. We conduct student voice activities such as Talk Circles and questionnaires.
- The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

7: Our School's Equality Objectives

Key priorities for action

Achievements to date:

Disability: We have maximised disabled access to school especially those in wheelchairs by replacing exterior doors with those which meet disabled access specifications. We are exploring funding options to provide disabled access to the side of the building. Our Forest School and nurture provision are key pillars of the school ethos together with our Christian foundation and values teaching.

Gender: We regularly review our curriculum to maximise opportunities to engage boys and girls in high quality learning experiences. Our strong outdoor curriculum led through Forest School (one session per week for all children in EYS and KS1 and alternate weeks for KS2) and practical learning experiences all give opportunities for active children and kinaesthetic learners to achieve and enjoy. We are working with HFL Teaching and Learning Advisor for English to support the development of writing across the school, with a focus to improving boys writing.

Race: As part of our curriculum review we have looked at ways to reflect our multi-cultural society. Books and resources purchased to ensure a multi-cultural mix.

Religion: Our broad based and inclusive curriculum ensures that children learn about a range of religious beliefs. Staff particularly value visits to places of worship to promote inter-faith understanding e.g. Mosque, Gurdwara, Hindu temple.

Sexual orientation: Our aims and values promote an inclusive ethos where everyone is valued. Playground/classroom incidents are closely monitored in order to be aware of and respond to any homophobic language or sexist language.

Community Cohesion: We have excellent links with our local community and have a programme of charitable giving that includes local, national and international concerns.

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

- Analysing achievement, progress data and JARV judgements
- Monitoring of progress against SDP Action Plan

This has involved all teaching staff through assessing pupils and analysing data and by working on the SDP.

Governors are involved in monitoring achievement and progress data and progress against the SDP. The school reports to governors on bullying and racist incidents.

Parent and Pupil Voice information is gathered through Parent Chat, Talk Circles and questionnaires.

List of equality objectives:

Equality Objectives	Protected Characteristic
1. Ensure equality of outcome for all pupils at each KS irrespective of gender	Gender
2. To promote cultural development through a rich range of experiences both in school and beyond	Race
3. Anticipate the needs of incoming pupil	Disability
4. To improve attendance and punctuality of vulnerable groups	All
5. To further develop stakeholder awareness of equality issues	All

Setting Equality Objectives Action Plan

Equality Objectives	Protected Characteristic	R	A	G	General Duty	Responsibility	Measurable success Indicator	Timing	Review date
1. Ensure equality of outcome for all pupils at each KS irrespective of gender	Gender				Advance equality of opportunity	SLT All staff	No significant difference in outcomes for boys/girls	Monitor at pupils progress meetings once a term	July 2024
2. To promote cultural development through a rich range of experiences both in school and beyond	Race				Eliminate unlawful discrimination Advance equality of opportunity	Head, SLT, All staff	Curriculum Display + Resources Visits/ Visitors Investigate feasibility of an international school award e.g. international school, global school, fair trade	On going	July 2024
3. Anticipate the needs of incoming pupils	Disability / SEN				Advance equality of opportunity	Head, SENDCo, Reception	Pupil successfully accessing school, settled and making progress	Summer term 2023	July 2024

					teacher, all staff, pupils	Disabled access to side of building established		
4. To improve attendance and punctuality of vulnerable groups	All			Advance equality of opportunity	Head, SBO Governors Attendance officer	Children's attendance/punctuality will improve	Termly AO visits	September 2023
5. To further develop stakeholder awareness of equality issues - staff, governors, parents, pupils	All			Eliminate unlawful discrimination Advance equality of opportunity	Named gov, Head, SENDCo, all staff, pupils and parents	Questionnaires, Talk Circles, Pupil voice, Parent Chat, Governor meetings, Staff meetings Teachers analysis of data/tracking/targeting	FGB meetings	July 2023