



# ST ALBAN'S CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

*"Inspired to make a difference in God's world with excellence and love"*

## SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

DOCUMENT INFORMATION			
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For further information, or to request this Scheme in an alternative format, please contact: Sarah Mann, Administrative Officer

## **DEVELOPING THE SCHEME**

### **1. Introduction**

As a Church of England (Aided) School, we uphold and promote Christian values and these include the belief that all people are equal and should be treated fairly.

We welcome the equality duties on schools, and regard these as essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. 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 learners, staff, governors and parents in particular. Throughout this Scheme, ‘parents’ can be taken to mean mothers, fathers, carers and other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by

- active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but also in its review and implementation
- proactive leadership
- prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
- removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our Scheme includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years.

We recognise that improving outcomes such as attendance or attainment for a specific group of pupils will help to improve our outcomes for all. Our commitment to equality is thus a fundamental part of our drive towards excellence.

## **2. National and Legal Context for Diversity**

All schools have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to

1. eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
2. promote equality of opportunity
3. promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must have due regard to

1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. eliminate disability- related harassment
4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

The disability equality general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it complements, and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments.

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

Schools also have specific duties under these three promotional duties, which are explained in Appendix A. This Scheme demonstrates our response to both the general and specific duties.

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non religious and socio-economic groups. There are no statutory requirements for schools to have a policy or action plan for promoting community cohesion. However, we have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty.

Although there are no equivalent promotional duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, we must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Appendix A provides further details of the requirements of equality legislation

### 3. School Context

Hampshire is a large and diverse county with over a million residents. There is a mix of urban and rural areas but the majority of the population live in urban areas. The 2001 census show that 2.3% of the population of Hampshire are from ethnic communities, although in recent years there has been an increase in migrant workers particularly from the EU. In 2008, 7.1% of school pupils were from ethnic communities. Approximately 15% of the population have declared a disability. For 2007/08, there were 732 reported incidents of hate crime; 83.5% were related to race and the remaining 16.5% were related to sexual orientation and transsexual issues. Nearly half the population are aged between 25 and 59, with an increasing number of people over the age of 75. The main religious group is Christian (8%), followed by Muslim (0.4%), Hindu (0.3%), and Sikh (0.1%).

#### Characteristics of our School

We are a one form entry primary school with 217 children on roll (January 2015). Although our school is situated in West Leigh, Havant, we serve the deanery of Havant so our pupils come from a large catchment area, including areas such as Emsworth, Hayling Island, Waterlooville and Rowlands Castle. Our staff and pupil profile is almost completely 'White British' with a small number of children from other ethnic backgrounds. 3.2% children speak English as an additional language.

The profile of our current pupils, staff and governors (Jan 2015) is represented in the table below:

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>ETHNIC MINORITY</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>
CHILDREN	216	111	105	21	4
TEACHING STAFF	14	1	13	0	0
SUPPORT STAFF	28	3	25	0	0
GOVERNORS	12	4	8	0	0

School data and pupil information indicates that we have pupils who have physical, visual and medical needs.

## DECIDING WHAT TO DO

### 4. Information Gathering

We will collect a broad range of qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our policies and practice and to demonstrate our progress in equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our single equality approach helps us to more effectively monitor our progress and performance, as our pupils and staff may face more than one barrier to achieving their full potential.

#### **a) Pupils**

We collect the following information:-

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Achievement and Progression
- Rewards and Sanctions
- Take up of extended school provision and extracurricular activities
- Other equality information for example complaints and incidents of race discrimination or bullying

We have identified the following **priorities** from evaluation of this information

- Continue to monitor attainment and progress for boys and girls in order to identify and respond quickly to any gender gaps that may be present (with a particular focus on those classes in which there is a current gender imbalance in the number of girls and boys in the class).
- Poor attendance is an issue for only a few children and through working closely with families this is improving. This attendance issue for these children is not linked to gender, ethnicity, disability or any other equality area but we will continue to consider these equality areas when tracking and monitoring attendance.
- As children from other ethnic backgrounds form such a small group in this school, it is difficult to compare their attainment and progress with national figures (e.g. RAISEonline) or even to compare them with their peers in the school as any comparison made would be statistically unreliable. Therefore we will continue to track carefully and monitor the progress of individual children, providing interventions and support as needed.

We will ensure that the information we gather will be used to promote equality by using it to inform school improvement and school self-evaluation.

## **b) Staff**

We collect the following qualitative and quantitative information to enable us to monitor by disability, race and gender:-

- Staff recruitment, retention
- CPD
- Promotion
- Disciplinary, grievance, competency
- Outcomes of appraisals and performance review processes
- Cessation of employment

As the school employs less than 150 staff, the Governing body is not required to publish information in relation to their staff.

We have identified the following priorities from evaluation of this information:-

- Due to the small numbers of staff the data does not produce any particularly useful patterns or trends. The higher proportion of female employees is not uncommon within the Primary phase of the education sector. We will continue to monitor this data, particularly during the recruitment process.

We will ensure that the information we gather will be used to promote equality by continuing to monitor and evaluate the involvement of all staff based on gender, race and disability as appropriate.

## **5. Specific Equality Areas**

This section of our scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality, and further action that we intend to take.

### **a) Race Equality**

What we have already achieved:

- The school complies with the County procedures regarding the reporting of racist incidents of which there are an extremely small number that have been resolved satisfactorily. All staff take any reports very seriously and follow school protocols for reporting and recording.
- We promote equality of opportunity and high expectations for every pupil.
- We promote good relations between people of different racial groups through our values led collective worship programme, PDL and RE curriculum and opportunities within topics. The strong Christian ethos of the school emphasises the importance of treating all people fairly and with respect and children respond well to this.

We want to do more by:

- Increasing the opportunities we give children within the curriculum to mix with other children from a wide variety of races and backgrounds.

## **b) Community Cohesion**

What we have already achieved:

### Teaching, learning and curriculum

- Our curriculum encourages children to respect others and value diversity (particularly through RE, PDL, assemblies and specific topics).
- We encourage and teach children the skills to take responsible action and children are keen to support and organise events to raise money for a wide range of charities (local, national and international).
- Children are given the opportunities to take part in events that involve them in the local community (e.g. singing in local care homes, supporting the local food bank).

### Equality and excellence

- We promote equality and excellence by identifying the needs of all children and in making appropriate provision to meet those needs, particularly for those groups of children for whom the risk of potential underachievement is high.
- We set aspirational targets for all children.
- We have prioritised the development of children's learning behaviours, in particular resilience, self-motivation and independence in learning through a 'Growth mindsets' approach.
- We track the progress of all individual children carefully and regularly to ensure children from all groupings are progressing well.

### Engagement and extended services -

- We promote the activities that are available for the children to extend their contact with the wider community.
- We support local community projects and events (e.g. Fairtrade fortnight, the local food bank)

We want to do more by:

- Increasing the opportunities we give within the curriculum for children to mix with other children from a wide variety of races and backgrounds.
- As children come from a wide catchment area (with many living in other communities) we want to increase their involvement with, and positive impact on, the local school community through events such as 'Litter Action'.

## **c) Disability Equality**

What we have already achieved:

### The curriculum

- We believe that all children are entitled to receive a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Inclusion is viewed as an important part of our ethos and we value all children and their families, whatever their individual needs.
- Children with specific disabilities receive additional adult support to ensure that they can access the curriculum, including off-site educational visits.

- We ensure children are able to access as much as possible of residential and more adventurous educational visits through excellent communication with visit providers and parents to ensure adaptations can be made to enable participation where this is possible.
- All teaching and learning takes account of our inclusion principles and every member of the school community is expected to promote and demonstrate inclusive behaviour. All staff are responsible for the implementation of these principles and are supported and have access to a range of advice and resources to support these.
- We promote positive attitudes towards disabled people through our ethos and curriculum.
- We promote equality of opportunity.
- The school tracks all children throughout the school to ensure that they are supported, planned for, and able to reach their full potential.

#### Physical environment

- Following an audit of the physical environment, we have made suitable adjustments to the physical environment of the school to meet individual needs. This has included taking expert advice on how to improve accessibility to parts of our school site. Improvements made have included: use of orange marking tape to support a visually impaired child and the addition of a lower stair rail for a child to be able to access the Year 3 and 4 classrooms safely. We have installed disabled toilet facilities and ensured access through the use of ramps where necessary.
- Currently we have very few members of the school community with specific needs relating to disability but we remain flexible and responsive to any needs that may arise.

We want to do more by:

- Ensuring that we offer (and can provide upon request) information contained on the school website in variety of formats to meet individual needs.
- Ensuring that our next Accessibility plan (Summer 2015) takes account of the views of a diverse group of people so that planned actions are tailored to the needs of our school community (particularly in the light of an increase in the number of needs within our pupil population).

#### **d) Gender Equality**

What we have already achieved:

- The school benefits from having teachers and support staff of both genders so that we are able to offer positive role models to both boys and girls. There are fewer male staff which, in a primary school, is not unusual and we are aware of the importance of positive male role models for children in primary school and welcome male volunteers (e.g. fathers volunteering as classroom helpers etc).
- The school complies with the County Equal Opportunities Policy when recruiting new staff.
- We ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination or harassment.
- We promote equality of opportunity.
- We avoid gender stereotyping by ensuring our curriculum and resources promote gender equality and provide both male and female role models.

We want to do more by:

- Ensuring that in classes where there is a gender imbalance, the curriculum meets the needs of both girls and boys, to ensure good progress for all children.

## **e) Other Equality Areas**

What we have already achieved:

- Through our RE curriculum (including educational visits) we have taught children about different beliefs and promoted tolerance and understanding.
- We have provided some opportunities within the curriculum for children to meet and socialise with children from other faith backgrounds.
- We ensure our recruitment processes provide equal opportunity.
- Children's behaviour towards each other and those they meet in other contexts (e.g. mixed school residential trips, visits to other schools and other educational visits) is excellent and is routinely commented on by others as being a very positive feature of the school. This is due to the focus on treating all people fairly and with respect through the promotion of our ethos and Christian values.
- We recognise that economic disadvantage can contribute to lower academic achievement. At this school our targeted provision has ensured that the achievement of children from disadvantaged backgrounds is higher by the time they leave the school than other disadvantaged children nationally.

We want to do more by:

- Increasing the opportunities we give children within the curriculum to mix with other children from a wide variety of races and background.
- Although we have very few reports of bullying (none of which have related to faith or homophobic bullying to date), when we next review our Behaviour and anti-bullying policy we want to make more explicit that homophobic or faith bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.
- Ensuring that children from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to achieve more highly than their peers nationally; closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils at this school and other children in the school, so that more of them make 'better than expected' progress by the time they leave in Year 6.

## **6. Impact Assessment**

When writing and reviewing policies we will ensure that an equality impact assessment process covering all aspects of equality is part of the procedure. We will endeavour to involve people with disabilities and other relevant groups as part of this process.

## **7. Working in Partnership**

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

- We try to arrange meetings at times which are most suitable for parents. Alternative dates or arrangements will be made where possible if a parent or group of parents cannot attend because of particular special needs.

- We work in partnership with relevant groups to help meet the requirements of disabled pupils.
- Our Home-School link workers provide additional support to families who find working with educational settings difficult.

## **PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE**

### **8. Publishing the Scheme, Raising Awareness**

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

- placing it on our website, making parents aware that it is available to read
- making it available on request
- including the scheme in our staff induction procedures

### **9. Monitoring and Evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan**

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Objectives. We will report annually on our progress and performance. Our annual report will be shared with Governors and a summary will be provided for parents and published on our website. We will inform staff of our progress and learners, where this is appropriate and relevant.

The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Equality Objectives and inform subsequent Single Equality Schemes.

We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality Scheme and the Equality Objectives every three years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will again involve staff, learners, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of the school community.

### **10. Links with Other School Policies**

While all policies recognise the need for equality and our commitment to make St Alban's a place where equality is at the heart of all we do, the following policies are particularly relevant:

Teaching and Learning  
Off-Site Educational Visits  
Behaviour and Anti-Bullying  
Pay

Admissions  
Local Offer/SEN  
Complaints  
Whistleblowing

## **11. Roles and Responsibilities**

The governing body will

- monitor the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, learners and parents
- ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation
- monitor achievement of equality targets
- check that implementation of the Scheme and Objectives achieves improved outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

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 Scheme and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this Scheme
- monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and Action plan
- provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this Scheme

The senior leadership team will

- drive forward implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- support staff to carry out their role in implementing this Scheme
- provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- ensure the Scheme is successfully promoted
- respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimization

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
  - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination 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

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

## St Alban's CE (Aided) Primary School Equality Targets

2015 – 2018

### **Race equality**

- Further increase the opportunities we give children within the curriculum to mix with other children from a wide variety of races and backgrounds.

### **Community cohesion**

- Further increase the opportunities we give within the curriculum for children to mix with other children from a wide variety of races and backgrounds.
- As children come from a wide catchment area (with many living in other communities), increase their involvement with, and positive impact on, the local school community through events such as 'Litter Action'.

### **Disability (also our Accessibility Plan)**

- Ensure that we offer (and can provide upon request) information contained on the school website in variety of formats to meet individual needs.

### **Gender**

- Ensure that in classes where there is a gender imbalance, the curriculum meets the needs of both girls and boys.

### **Other equality areas**

- Although we have very few reports of bullying (none of which have related to faith or homophobic bullying to date), revise the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy to make more explicit that homophobic or faith bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.
- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils at this school make the same progress as non disadvantaged pupils at this school.

**Progress towards these targets will be reported on in the Spring Term 2016.**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN MORE DETAIL**

#### **The Duty to Promote Race Equality**

The Race Relations Act 1976 has been amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (the RRAA). This Act was introduced as a result of the MacPherson Report, which followed the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. This report highlighted the issue of institutional discrimination.

As a response, the government introduced a duty to promote race equality for listed public bodies, including Local Authorities and schools. The duty is designed to assist institutions to tackle discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations. Its aim is to make promotion of race equality central to the way that public bodies work, and to all areas of their work, including policy making, service delivery, (including teaching and learning), regulation and enforcement and employment practice.

The Race Equality Duty has a general duty with three inter-related parts. It means that schools, in carrying out their functions, must give due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
2. promote equality of opportunity
3. promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Although these different elements often interlink, they need to be given 'due regard' in their own right. To support progress in delivering the general duty, there are a series of 'specific duties' for schools, to:

- assess the impact of policies, including the Race Equality Policy, on students and staff of different racial groups;
- monitor policies for adverse impact on race equality, by gathering and using information on the admission and progress of students and the recruitment and career progress of staff (including training for staff);
- include in the written Race Equality Policy a statement indicating the arrangements for publishing the policy, and the results of assessment and monitoring;
- publish annually the results of monitoring data, and actions taken towards achievement of overall objectives and priorities
- fully review the race equality policy every three years.

#### **The Duty to Promote Community Cohesion**

The Commission for Integration and Cohesion, set up by the Government in the wake of the London 2005 terrorist attacks, identified an integrated and cohesive community as one in which:

- everyone knows their rights and responsibilities
- people of different backgrounds have similar opportunities
- there is trust in local institutions such as the local council, the police and the courts, to act fairly

- everyone recognises the contribution of both new arrivals and those already settled, and are not threatened by change
- there are positive relationships between people from different backgrounds, at work, at school and at college.

From September 2007, schools have a duty to promote community cohesion. DCSF guidance states that

- By community cohesion, we 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 positive relationships exist and to continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community

Community cohesion does not just apply to differences in faith or ethnicity, but includes any difference, for example in gender, disability or sexual orientation. However, the main focus of the duty is to promote good community relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socioeconomic groups. Unlike the promotional duties for race, disability and gender equality, there are no statutory requirements to produce a policy or scheme or action plan. Schools must decide the best approach to implement the duty effectively, for example through a policy, action plan or working party. However, embedding the school's response in a Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan will make it easier for schools to monitor their progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty.

Further information can be found in DCSF guidance; '*Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion*' which may be downloaded from [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/communitycohesion/community\\_cohesion\\_guidance/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/communitycohesion/community_cohesion_guidance/)

### **Disability Equality Legislation**

There are several pieces of disability equality legislation that schools must respond to, including

- SEN duties
- duties under the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- the Planning Duties of DDA 1995 Part 4
- Disability Equality Duty (DDA 2005)

Each of these are now considered in turn:

SEN duties provide auxiliary aids and services for schools to make adjustments for individual disabled learners to support inclusion.

SENDA protects current and prospective disabled learners from discrimination. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled learners do not experience less favourable treatment or substantial disadvantage. The reasonable adjustment duties for schools under SENDA do not include the provision of auxiliary aids and services as these are provided by the SEN framework (see above), and over time through the planning duties (see below).

The planning duties of DDA Part 4 aims to ensure schools increase over time their accessibility to disabled people. Three year Accessibility Plans should have been in place by April 2003, and updated for 2006-2009. Accessibility Plans should demonstrate how the school will

- increase access to disabled pupils in the school curriculum, for example changes to teaching and learning, classroom organisation, deployment of learning support, staff training, curriculum delivery
- improve access to the physical environment, for example improved signage, floorings and room layouts
- improve accessibility of written material, for example ensuring handouts, timetables and information on school events are available in alternative formats such as large print or easy read

These three sets of duties work together to ensure disabled learners access and enjoy education in its broadest sense with the same degree of dignity and choice as their non-disabled peers.

The Disability Equality Duty has a general duty with six inter-related parts. It means that schools, in carrying out their functions, must give due regard to the need to:

1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. eliminate disability- related harassment
4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

Although these different elements often interlink, they need to be given 'due regard' in their own right.

The general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it complements, and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments. An anticipatory approach requires adjustments to be made in advance of individual disabled people attempting to use a service or access education or employment.

To support progress in delivering the general duty, there are a series of 'specific duties' for schools, to:

- produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme and equality action plan;
- involve disabled people in the development of the DES and equality action plan;
- explain the method of assessing the impact of policies and practice upon disabled people;
- monitor the impact of policy and practice on disabled people by gathering and using information on:
  - staff recruitment, development and retention
  - the educational opportunities available to, and the achievements of disabled pupils. (This should be interpreted broadly)

- explain how the results of steps taken to achieve the Action Plan will be published on an annual basis;
- fully review the Disability Equality Scheme every three years.

### **Definition of a Disabled Person**

Under the DDA a person has a disability if s/he has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term, adverse effect on her / his ability to carry out day-to-day activities'. 'Substantial' does not mean significant – it simply means more than 'minor' or 'trivial'. 'Day to day' activities often include activities that pupils are asked to carry out in the classroom. 'Long term' generally means more than one year.

This is a broad definition that is likely to cover people with

- physical or sensory impairments
- learning difficulties, including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- mental health difficulties
- medical conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis

Between 7 – 8% of learners will be covered by the definition of a disabled person, rising to 10% of 16-24 year olds and 15 - 20% for people of working age. One in three people between 50 and 65 will be covered by the definition. While there is an overlap between the definition of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs, not all disabled pupils will have SEN, and not all pupils with SEN will be disabled. For example, a learner with diabetes may not have SEN but have rights under DDA. A learner with emotional and behavioural difficulties because of difficult personal and social circumstances may have SEN but not be covered under DDA.

It is important to note that many impairments are 'unseen', and also that over 50% of people who are covered by the DDA definition of a disabled person are unlikely to consider themselves as disabled.

### **Involvement of Disabled People**

At the heart of the Disability Equality Duty is the need to involve disabled people. The Code of Practice for the duty makes clear that consultation by itself is not sufficient to meet this legal requirement. Consultation may allow choice between limited, often predetermined options, or canvas opinion, but participants have few or no opportunities to propose alternatives, or to take part in putting plans into action. Participants have a voice, but no power to ensure their voice has influence.

Providers must move beyond consultation to achieve active and genuine involvement with disabled people. This empowers and enables participants to create a vision of their own future and to become actively involved in making it happen. Participants establish a partnership to share decision-making, are given genuine opportunities and are actively engaged in exploring options, and shaping action and outcomes.

## **Approaches to Disability Equality**

The Disability Rights Commission highlighted the social model of disability as being essential to the successful implementation of the DDA duties. The social model identifies that; 'The disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal environmental barriers.'

This premise provides the basis for the school's commitment to implement the Disability Equality Duty by examining its policies, procedures and practices and making every effort to remove attitudinal, cultural, social and physical barriers. The Disability Equality Duty shifts the focus away from the individual, placing responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the institution to dismantle barriers before these have an impact on the individual. Further information can be found in DCSF guidance 'Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years settings' which may be downloaded from

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/disability/disabilityandthedda/>

## **The Duty to Promote Gender Equality**

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) has been amended by the Equality Act 2006 to place a duty on all public authorities to promote gender equality.

The Gender Equality Duty has a general duty with two inter-related parts. It means that schools, in carrying out their functions, must give due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The duty has been introduced in recognition of the need for a radical new approach to gender equality – one which places more responsibility with public bodies to think strategically about gender equality, rather than leaving it to individuals to challenge poor practice. As with race and disability equality, the gender equality duty applies in respect of all the school's functions including policy-making, teaching and learning, and employment. It also applies to people who use the services of the school who are not staff and learners, such as people who participate in family learning evening courses provided by the school

To support progress in delivering the general duty, there are a series of 'specific duties' for schools, to:

- prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme, showing how the school will meet the general and specific duties and setting out gender equality objectives.
- in formulating overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap in support of the Equal Pay Act (1970).
- gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services, including teaching and learning
- consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, students and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine gender equality objectives.
- assess the impact of current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.

- explain how the results of steps taken to achieve the Action Plan will be published on an annual basis;
- fully review the Gender Equality Scheme every three years.

### **Transsexual / Transgender Staff and Students**

As part of the Gender Equality Duty, public authorities are also required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training for people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

Transsexual people are people who identify their gender to be different from the gender assigned to them at birth. Sometimes known as gender dysphoria, this is a recognised medical condition. It is accompanied by a sense of discomfort with one's physical body and a wish to go through a process known as gender reassignment or transition. The term transsexual is usually used to describe a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.

### **Other Equality Legislation**

In addition to the duties to promote race, disability and gender equality, and the duty to promote community cohesion, schools are also covered by duties not to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation, age or religion and belief. These laws do not have positive duties to *promote* equality associated with them, but schools must ensure that through their policies and practices, they are not discriminating on any of these grounds. The regulations, for example, make it unlawful to

- discriminate directly or indirectly because of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because they associate with someone of a particular sexual orientation or religion or belief, including friends and parents / carers / responsible adults
- subject someone to harassment because of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because they associate with someone of a particular sexual orientation or religion or belief, including friends and parents / carers / responsible adults
- victimise someone because they have or intend to make an allegation of discrimination or harassment, or they have or intend to give evidence in relation to an allegation of discrimination or harassment

In relation to religion and belief regulations, there are certain and limited exceptions such as admissions, curriculum, collective worship and faith schools. For example, faith schools may give preference to young people who follow that particular faith. No school is allowed to deny someone education on the grounds of their race, sexual orientation, religion or belief or because they have a disability. However, schools are allowed to reject prospective students based on their age. Once they are above the national school leaving age, students are expected to go to college or other learning providers. Single sex schools are allowed to select pupils on the grounds of their gender.