Equality Information

Introduction

St Andrew's Primary School is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with respect as we want our school to continue to be a safe and inspiring learning environment for all our pupils.

This school recognises that people have different needs and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating everyone the same. St Andrew's Primary School creates inclusive processes and practices where the varying needs of individuals can be identified and met. This document explains how we show our commitment to equality[i] for our school population and how we plan to tackle inequalities that may impact at school.

Celebrating our Successes

Since 2020, St Andrew's has had the following Equality Objectives:

Objective one: ensure that KS2 boys are supported to improve their reading skills.

Objective two: to improve attendance of pupil premium learners and pupils with SEND

Objective one

In order to achieve objective one*, to ensure that KS2 boys are supported to improve their reading* the school completed the following:

- An improved range of reading books to encourage boys' reading.
- Introduced Little Wandle phonic scheme to ensure consistent teaching and support throughout the school.
- Teaching staff continue to develop pupils' reading skills and comprehension using challenging texts and questions to stimulate thinking.
- Reading records are scrutinised and checked regularly, vulnerable children are listened to at least once a day.
- Reading challenges have been introduced, as well as book weeks, second hand book sales.

Objective two

This objective, to improve attendance of pupil premium learners and pupils with SEND, arose following scrutiny of attendance figures which showed that disadvantaged learners with SEND had a higher rate of absence when compared to their peers. The school has addressed this by:

- Identify pupils at risk of becoming Persistent Absent (PA) pupils or Severely Absent (SA) pupils.

- A consistent and clear attendance policy and procedure and ensuring Penalty Notices are being reported to the LA as and when required.
- Building strong relationships with parents to encourage attendance and promote the school as a safe space i.e coffee mornings, school chaplain, visible presence of HT at 'drop off', meetings with HT.
- Those with lower attendance are offered additional support by our SEND co-ordinator. This support is varied and tailored to the individual need of the pupil and may involve working with outside agencies and outreach programmes.
- Rewarding high attendance by class to promote the importance of attending school when well enough.
- Staff encouraging GP visits when a child is frequently ill.

Our current data has demonstrated an improvement in attendance of children with SEND over the past three years.

Absence % of children with SEND (Whole school)		
School year 2021-22	School year 2022-23	School year 2023-24
6.7% (6.0%)	6% (4.5%)	5.6% (4.4%)

Although the comparison with whole school data must be viewed with caution due to the small numbers of children with SEND and the resulting data distortion. The data does show that the absence percentage of children with SEND has fallen since 2021-22.

Priorities for the Year 2024/25

Sex (Gender) – Boys and Girls

The underachievement of boys compared with girls persists both nationally and in Wiltshire. In Wiltshire, the attainment gap was marginally under 8 percentage points in 2019, with 68% of girls achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics compared to 60% of boys. In Wiltshire, the sex (girls/boys) attainment gap for the 'major' ethnic category All Black Pupils was larger at 10 percentage points with 62.7% of girls and 52.6% of boys achieving the expected standard *in Reading, Writing and Maths.*

Two thirds of the gender gap in achieving the expected standard in Reading at age eleven is attributable to the fact that boys have lower levels of language and attention at age five. This school knows that intervention targeting early language and attention have potential for improving outcomes for all children. Boys benefit from such interventions because they are more likely to have these problems to begin with. St Andrew's is very mindful of the potential gender gap and will address this with the following equality objective:

Objective One: To ensure that KS2 boys are supported to improve their writing skills.

This will be achieved by:
- Clear expectations for each writing unit. Training for the planning of these has been implemented and the impact of this training is evident in classroom practice.
- Each year group has a tight list of non-negotiables, and the SL will hold teachers to account for ensuring these are achieved
- Focus on plugging gaps in spelling & handwriting.
- Rapid catch-up groups in addition to class teaching of spelling.

Minority Ethnic Pupils

Many minority ethnic groups of pupils do well both in Wiltshire and nationally but there are also groups where underachievement persists. Underachievement for the groups highlighted in this report are a national as well as a Wiltshire concern and have been an ongoing issue since ethnic monitoring was introduced.

St Andrew's is fortunate to have pupils from 11 different Ethnic groups. The small numbers of ethnic minority pupils that attend St Andrew's primary school mean that individual pupil-targeted approaches are used to identify both underachievement, and to celebrate successes. LA and national attainment data provides a valuable source of information to identify potential areas of concern.

All Black Pupils Major Ethnic Monitoring Category

LA data has highlighted concerns about the attainment of the All Black Pupils major ethnic monitoring category and for the Black Caribbean minor ethnic monitoring category.[ii]

Wiltshire Key Stage 2 data for 2019 showed attainment was lower for pupils in the All Black Pupil major ethnic monitoring category compared with the White British pupils minor ethnic monitoring category. Fewer boys (8 percentage points lower) in the All Black Pupil category achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths compared with boys in the White British ethnic category. Attainment for Black Caribbean pupils was 14 percentage points lower than the attainment of White British pupils.

A lower proportion of Wiltshire pupils in the All Black Pupil major ethnic monitoring category achieved a Higher Standard in the Reading, Writing and Maths assessments compared with White British pupils. Pupils in the All Black Pupil were 3.7% less likely to have achieved the Higher Standard compared to White British Pupils.

When and as appropriate St Andrew's Primary School works closely with the LA to implement proven strategies to raise attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups during the primary school years.

Our curriculum, teaching, policies and practices are regularly reviewed and updated. This school is able to receive regular guidance and information from the LA as well as sharing best practice with other Wiltshire schools.

Gypsy/Roma/Traveller Pupils

Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller pupils are the lowest achieving ethnic groups.

In Wiltshire, just under 18% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved the expected standard. [ii] While the overwhelming majority of Wiltshire Gypsy/Roma/Traveller pupils choose to attend primary school until the end of Year 6, a majority of Wiltshire Gypsy and Traveller families choose to home educate their children during the secondary school years. [ii]

A House of Commons Briefing Paper (September 2017) reported that education issues for Gypsies and Travellers include prejudice, discrimination and discriminatory attitudes. The issues also include the schools' responses to discrimination, and high levels of self-exclusion from mainstream education because of discrimination. [iv]

National research published in 2018 suggests there has been a significant increase in the number of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller children who are being cared for by local councils. The data shows an increase of 900% for the numbers of Gypsy/Roma children and 400% for Irish Traveller children since 2009. One of the reasons suggested is that Gypsy/Roma and Traveller families are less likely to be offered or to access early help and support and this is important as it is an area in which schools are able to help. [v]

English as an Additional Language
In Wiltshire schools, the same proportion, 64%, of pupils for whom English is known to be their first language and those for whom it is an additional language achieved the expected standard in 2019. [ii]

It should be noted that children with EAL have widely varying levels of English proficiency. Some children are new to English and some are fluently multilingual. Attainment is also affected by first language; for example, there are significant differences between Tamil and Chinese speakers, who, on average, perform better than Pashto and Turkish speakers. In addition, prior education and arrival time in English education impacts on attainment. [vi] The Wiltshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service advise on best practice for individual pupils to ensure those most vulnerable to poor attainment are to fulfil their academic potential.

Faith and Belief

St Andrew's recognises how important faith and belief can be as part of a young person's developing identity, whether this relates to a specific faith or belief, or whether this relates to wider belief systems, morals and ethics. St Andrew's Primary School is committed to supporting all our young people as they develop a personal relationship with their own values and beliefs, and to supporting, in the context of the Human Rights agenda, the role this plays in the moral and ethical choices they make in life.

This school takes incidents of prejudice-related bullying seriously and is committed to working closely with parents/carers to create a school environment which is nurturing, friendly and supportive for all our children. Our school has established a procedure for recording all incidents of prejudice-based bullying, and this includes bullying related to religion and belief. Comments from young people about bullying include the following, "Encourage and celebrate difference – don't single us out if we are different, have difficulties, or have different beliefs and views", the Wiltshire Anti-Bullying Charter. https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/core-themes/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/anti-bullying-practice/ This school is vigilant in maintaining an awareness of, and appropriate responses to, this possibility. St Andrew's is aware that negative faith-based media attention can have an impact on all children, and recognises the importance of ensuring that pupils are provided with accurate and appropriate information.

St Andrew's ensures that all pupils gain knowledge of and respect for the different faiths in Britain as part of our role to prepare pupils for modern life in a diverse Britain. As part of the RE curriculum pupils learn about different religious festivals and customs.

St Andrew's recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern. This school is aware that Islamophobia and anti-Semitism (discrimination or prejudice against people because they are Muslim or Jewish) is increasing and that it displays many of the same traits as racism for example 11% of Islamophobic incidents happen in educational institutions [viii], including name-calling, jibes about so-called Islamic State, violence, and victimisation when wearing a hijab [ix]. Many Muslim young people say abuse is so commonplace it is normalised [x]. Childline has recorded a spike in race- and faith-based bullying with victims reporting that they feel isolated, withdrawn and lack self-esteem [xi]. Nationally, between 2015/6 and 2016/7 there was an increase of 37 per cent in the numbers of faith or belief-based incidents reported to the Police either on school property or near to school property.[vii]

This school will continue its work to inform and actively promote acceptance and respect.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation (LGBT)

Gender identity remains a relatively new area for schools but this Protected Characteristic identifies a small section of society as vulnerable to discrimination and inequality. Gender identity was included in equality legislation for the first time in 2010, and many schools, parents, as well as wider society, are learning about the issues for the first time.

Schools in Wiltshire access expert advice and support from the LA, as well as exchanging best practice with other schools. St Andrew's Primary School recognises that gender identity is a complex area and that children, young people and their families are navigating an equality area where best practice is not fixed, and where the central advice is to be 'led by the child'.

This school is committed to ensuring that all our children feel safe while at school and that each child is given the chance to develop their unique identity with support from teaching and support staff, and their peers.

Pupils are taught that families come in many different forms and include single-parent; grandparent-led; same-sex parents; step-families; foster families; families who have adopted children; etc. Our pupils understand that although families can be very different, what matters is that a family love and care for each other.

This school recognises that negative views within wider society about LGBT+ [xiv] people can have a detrimental effect on pupil wellbeing. Data from Childline and anecdotal information from CAMHS (serving Wiltshire children) show that increasing numbers of children in primary schools are raising issues relating to gender identity and sexual orientation. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not mental health concerns but many of the referrals received by CAMHS for young people with issues related to their gender identity or sexual orientation are linked to bullying, isolation and internalised negative views about LGBT+ people, that in turn impacts on their emotional and mental health. This school

recognises that pupils with these issues will need support within schools and national websites such as Young Minds. CAMHS is encouraging of primary schools who can provide such support to their pupils, as dealing effectively with these issues at a younger age appears to reduce the more serious mental health issues presented by some LGBT+ secondary school pupils.

There are many charitable organisations providing support on gender identity to young people, their families and to their schools. There are also organisations able to provide advice and support where a pupil has a parent who is transgender. The LA has up to date information about the different organisations, the services they provide and how to contact them and is available to advise.

This school has benefited from the work undertaken by the Church of England and published in the document *"Valuing All God's Children"*. [xv] This excellent document provides a framework that helps our school to address all issues of bullying behaviour and discriminatory language, and includes homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

Disability (Special Educational Needs and Disability)

SEN pupils are categorised as 'SEN with a statement or Education, health and care (EHC) plan' and 'SEN support'. In Wiltshire in 2019, 16% of pupils at the end of key stage 2 had a special educational need and 4% had a statement or education, health and care plan. [ii]

Of all reported characteristics, pupils with SEN have the largest attainment gap when compared to those without any identified SEN. [ii] In 2019, 25.6% of Wiltshire pupils with SEN support reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, compared with 75% of Wiltshire pupils with no identified SEN, resulting in an attainment gap of 49 percentage points. [ii]

In the UK, 8% of children are disabled as defined under the Equality Act 2010. Shockingly, but unsurprisingly, a disabled person with a degree is still no more likely to be in work than a non-disabled person whose highest qualification is at GCSE. Societal attitude and stereotyping are likely to be a factor.

SEND pupils and the link with poverty

This school is aware that there is a strong link between poverty and disabilities that negatively impact on educational attainment. [xvi] Children from low-income families are more likely than their peers to be born with inherited special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and are more likely to develop some forms of SEND in childhood. Also, children with SEND are more likely than their peers to be born into poverty, and, in addition, more likely to experience poverty as they grow up.

St Andrew's, as part of its support for disadvantaged pupils, has made the achievement and attendance of pupils with SEND a whole school priority and is supported with expert advice from our SEND education specialists. St Andrew's also knows that a strong partnership with parents/carers is important, and will continue to work collaboratively to support parents/carers as they seek to provide their children with a stimulating home-learning environment.

After scrutiny of attendance figures, it was revealed that the attendance of pupil premium children with SEND was, despite improvement, lower than that of their peers. With this in mind it was decided that our second equality objective should remain "to improve attendance of pupil premium learners and pupils with SEND."

Pupils with Mental Health Concerns

There is an increasing understanding of the negative impact of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) on the educational attainment of pupils. The incorporation of mental health into the Equality Act 2010 has helped to highlight this important issue. [i]

At St Andrew's we recognise the importance of our pupils to feel happy and safe and some of the ways we achieve this are:

- An established behaviour policy
- An established anti-bullying policy
- Worry monsters
- Employ a school chaplain
- Promoting and teaching online safety both in school and with external partners
- ELSA support through the provision of one to one, or group, activities
- Children are encouraged to join the enrichment clubs and activities
- A rigorous monitoring of pupil progress to identify children who need extra learning support, no child is left to struggle
- Promoting Healthy Eating
- Providing well balanced school meals

Pupil wellbeing is paramount and policies and practices are embedded in school life.

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EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

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Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have **at least one Equality Objective** that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years.   St Andrew's Primary School has following objectives:

Objective One: ensure that boys are supported to improve their writing skills.

Objective Two: to improve attendance of pupil premium learners and pupils with SEND.

i The Equality Act 2010 and Schools
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

ii https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised

iii Understanding the Gender Gap in Literacy and Language Development: Professor Gemma Moss and Dr Liz Washbrook, University of Bristol 2016 https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/education/documents/bristol-working-papers-in-education/Understanding%20the%20Gender%20Gap%20working%20paper.pdf

iv Gypsies and Travellers, House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 08083, 28 September 2017 http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8083/CBP-8083.pdf

v The Fragility of Professional Competence, A Preliminary Account of Child Protection Practice with Romani and Traveller Children in England, January 2018, University of Salford, Manchester http://usir.salford.ac.uk/46146/1/the-fragility-of-professional-competence-january-2018.pdf

vi Educational Outcomes for Pupils who have English as an Additional Language: The Education Policy Institute, The Bell Foundation, Unbound Philanthropy by Jo Hutchinson, Director for Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners (February 2018) https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/research-report/educational-outcomes-of-children-with-english-as-an-additional-language/

vii https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652136/hate-crime-1617-hosb1717.pdf

viii Tell Mama, 2017

ix NSPCC, 2018

x British Youth Council, 2016

xi NSPCC, 2018

xii https://www.equaliteach.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/FAITH-IN-US.pdf
Funded by the Home Office Hate Crime Communities Project Fund

xiii LGBT History Month, https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-history-month-education celebrated in February each year.

xiv Stonewall School Report, 2017, The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans Pupils in Britain's Schools https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017

xv Valuing All God's Children, 2017, https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Valuing%20All%20God%27s%20Children%27s%20Report_0.pdf

xvi Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Special Education Needs and their Links to Poverty, 26 February