



**RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL**

STAFF/STUDENT

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Policy: Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: May 2016
Revision Number: 1	Revised: May 2016
Reviewable: Every three years (2019)	Author: AHT: SEND/Safeguarding

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose and scope	3
3. Our school	3
4. Guiding principles.....	4
5. Action plans and objectives	6
6. Roles and responsibilities	6
7. Curriculum.....	7
8. Ethos and organisation	7
9. Addressing prejudice and bullying.....	7
10. Religious observance	8
11. Staff development and training.....	8
12. Commissioning and procurement	8
13. Equality impact assessments	8
14. Other school policies.....	8
15. Publishing the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan	9
16. Breaches of the Single Equality Scheme	9
17. Monitoring and review	9
Appendix 1: Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan 2016 – 2019.....	10
Appendix 2: Summary of Equality Legislation for Schools	15
Appendix 3: Examples of School Activities Contributing to Equalities Best Practice.	21

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Single Equality Scheme brings together the school's approach for promoting equality in our policies and procedures and in our day-to-day interactions with the whole school community.
- 1.2 It outlines the commitment of the staff, students and governors to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all. We will treat everyone the same, and also understand and tackle the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of students in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.
- 1.3 We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity, and
 - foster good relations between groups.
- 1.4 We welcome our responsibility to promote community cohesion and are committed to developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious (and non-religious) and socio-economic groups.
- 1.5 These priorities have been incorporated into our Single Equality Scheme.

2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1 Our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan (Appendix 1) covers a three-year period from 2016 to 2017. It integrates our statutory duties in relation to race, disability and gender and the promotion of community cohesion (see Appendix 2 for the legal framework). The duties cover the wider school community including governors, staff, students and parents/carers.
- 2.2 The scheme also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment across all groups of protected characteristics.
- 2.3 The school's Single Equality Scheme and action plan enables us to achieve a framework for action which ensures that we meet our responsibilities and duties in an inclusive way.
- 2.4 The school will continue to meet its statutory duties by setting equality objectives and reporting annually on the progress of its Single Equality Scheme and action plan.

3. Our school

- 3.1 Our school is based in South Yorkshire. We have below average number of students from ethnic minority and mixed race backgrounds
- 3.2 We have a below average proportion of students with:
 - a Statement of Educational Needs
 - an Education Care and Health Plan
 - registered disability
 - a disadvantaged background

4. Guiding Principles

- 4.1 In meeting the duties described above we are adopting seven guiding principles, adapted from those chosen by the Department for Education in their Single Equality Scheme.

Principle 1: All members of the school community are of equal value

- 4.1.1 All learners and potential learners and their parents and carers are of equal value and we strive to make the best possible provision for all:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender/gender identity or sexual identity
- irrespective of other factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where they live.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

- 4.1.2 We know that treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Different people have different needs and treating them all the same can lead to some people being disadvantaged because their needs are not met. Our policies, practices and programmes will not discriminate, but will take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, culture and religion, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, so that the different needs and experiences of boys and girls, women and men are recognised
- factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where people live, so that different needs and experiences are recognised.

Principle 3: We value our staff

- 4.1.3 We value our staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school. Our policies and programmes benefit all members of staff in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation
- irrespective of other factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where they live.

Principle 4: We foster positive attitudes and relationships

4.1.4 We know that equalities is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views and we seek to promote good relationships between all groups. Our policies and programmes promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, and good relations between disabled and non-disabled people
- positive interaction and good relations between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, and national origin or national status
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and people of different sexual orientation
- mutual respect and good relations between people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

Principle 5: We feel that the community as a whole should benefit

4.1.5 We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in our school. Our policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled and non-disabled people alike
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- women as well as men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people as well as heterosexual people
- people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

Principle 6: We are proactive in addressing inequalities

4.1.6 We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, our policies and programmes maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- boys and girls, women and men, and people of different sexual orientation
- people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

Principle 7: We consult and involve all groups affected by our policies

4.1.7 We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and strive to involve them in policy review. We recognise that it is particularly important to involve those who in the past may have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who may continue to face barriers:

- disabled people
- people of minority ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds

- women as well as men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people as well as heterosexual people
- people who face challenges because of their age group, income, family circumstances or where they live.

5. Action plans and objectives

- 5.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we formulate specific and measurable equality objectives based on the guiding principles above that take into account local and national priorities and issues as appropriate to ensure equality in terms of:
- disability
 - ethnicity
 - gender and gender identity
 - sexual orientation
 - religion and belief
 - age
 - socio-economic circumstances.
- 5.2 These objectives are outlined in our Single Equality Scheme Action Plan (Appendix 1). We keep these objectives under review and ensure that our practical priorities, policies and procedures promote equality.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1 Governing Body – The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this scheme and action plan. They will delegate a governor with specific responsibility for this scheme. They will review the scheme and action plan on a yearly basis.
- 6.2 Headteacher – The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the scheme and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and that they are given necessary training and support. The headteacher will report progress to the governing body and will ensure that the senior leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the scheme or actions arising from it.
- 6.3 Senior Leadership Team – The senior leadership team will have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the scheme and provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme. Along with the headteacher they will provide advice and support in dealing with any incidents/issues.
- 6.4 Staff – The staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for students with additional needs and maintain a good awareness of equalities issues. Staff will be involved in the development of the scheme and how it relates to them.
- 6.5 Parents/Carers – Parents and carers will be involved in the development of the scheme and be encouraged to support it and to attend any meetings and activities in relation to the scheme and action plan.

7. Curriculum

- 7.1 We will ensure that curriculum planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity. All staff ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel their contributions are valued.
- 7.2 Positive steps are taken to include students who may otherwise be marginalized. We take account of students' cultural backgrounds, experiences and starting points and are responsive to students' different learning styles. All students are regularly consulted about their learning.
- 7.3 We ensure that on entry to the school, our students are placed in form groups that are equally balanced in terms of gender, source primary school, special educational need, disability, ethnicity or race, academic ability, and socio economic background ('Disadvantaged students') We split siblings, twins, triplets etc who are within the same chronological year group, to ensure that each is able to develop as an individual and is has an equitable personal experience.
- 7.3 The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse student performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any disparities which are identified will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.

8. Ethos and organisation

- 8.1 We ensure that our guiding principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies, procedures and practices, including those that are concerned with:
- students' progress, attainment and achievement
 - students' personal development, welfare and well-being
 - teaching styles and strategies
 - admissions and attendance
 - staff recruitment, retention and professional development
 - care, guidance and support
 - behaviour, discipline and exclusions
 - partnership working with parents, carers and guardians
 - working with the wider community
 - participation of groups in wider school activities
 - preparing all members of the school community for positively contributing to a diverse society.

9. Addressing prejudice and bullying

- 9.1 Clear procedures are in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently. All forms of bullying and harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.
- 9.2 We are opposed to all forms of prejudice that stand in the way of fulfilling our legal duties for all aspects of equality:
- prejudices around disability and special educational needs

- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

9.3 There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with and staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters.

9.4 We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and where requested can provide a report about the numbers, types and seriousness of these incidents and how they are dealt with.

10. Religious observance

10.1 We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students and their parents and carers and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

11. Staff development and training

11.1 We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

11.2 All staff are offered the opportunity to engage in appropriate development to ensure they can support the achievement of our Guiding Principles.

12. Commissioning and procurement

12.1 We are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We ensure that we purchase goods and services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

13. Equality impact assessments

13.1 We undertake equality impact assessments to identify the impact or effect of our policies, procedures and programmes on the whole school community. Where negative impacts are identified we take steps to deal with this to ensure the equity of services to all.

14. Other school policies

14.1 A number of our other school policies directly link into and inform our Single Equality Scheme. These include:

- the school improvement plan
- the school inclusion and SEN policy
- the accessibility plan
- the anti bullying policy

- the behaviour policy
- the racist incident reporting protocol

15. Publishing the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan

- 15.1 This policy and plan will be published on our school website and hard copies available from the school office. We will ensure that the content of this policy is known to all governors and staff and (as appropriate) to all students and their parents and carers.
- 15.2 In addition all governors and staff will have access to a range of resources that discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion.

16. Breaches of the Single Equality Scheme

- 16.1 Breaches of this scheme will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

17. Monitoring and review

- 17.1 In line with legislative requirements we will report annually on our progress and performance covering protected characteristics, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information in one annual report.
- 17.2 This scheme will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on students, staff, parents/carers and all the different stakeholders that make up our school community.

Appendix 1: Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan 2016-2019

i) Planning for Equality

<i>R = Race, D = Disability, G = Gender, SO = Sexual Orientation, A = Age, R/B = Religion or Belief CC = Community Cohesion.</i>							Planned Outcome	Planned Actions	Timescale	To Be Actioned By	Monitored by
R	D	G	SO	A	R/B	CC					
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>School identifies priorities and actions to be taken for inclusion in the SDP across the whole area of school activity</i>	<i>School Development Plan published and linked to relevant school policies, e.g. attendance, behaviour, teaching and education</i>	<i>Annually by October</i>	<i>Governing Body and Headteacher</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>All staff are aware of the Single Equality Scheme and understand their responsibilities</i>	<i>Raise awareness of Single Equality Scheme at: Induction Staff Team meetings</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Heads of Departments</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>Schemes of work explicitly address the causes and consequences of discrimination and help students recognise and understand and challenge stereotypes.</i>	<i>Curriculum areas include within their schemes of work opportunities to promote shared values and challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping, e.g. racism, homophobia</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>Character curriculum actively promotes awareness and understanding of minorities and vulnerable groups</i>	<i>Scheme of work includes opportunities to promote shared values and challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping, e.g. racism, homophobia, disability, religion, socio economic situation, gender bias, etc</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>

Appendix 1: Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan 2016-2019

ii) Access to the curriculum

<i>R = Race, D = Disability, G = Gender, SO = Sexual Orientation, A = Age, R/B = Religion or Belief, CC = Community Cohesion</i>							Planned Outcome	Planned Actions	Timescale	To Be Actioned By	Monitored by
R	D	G	SO	A	R/B	CC					
√	√	√	√	√	√		<i>To ensure ongoing development of differentiation to support all identified groups of learners</i>	<i>Teaching and Learning team / Lead Practitioners to lead training in differentiation skills and strategies. Teaching Assistants and HLTA's to support classroom teachers Exemplar examples to be identified through FEWs and shared in the directory of best practice and the Ridgewood Excellence Framework</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>AHT: Teaching and Learning AHT: Inclusion Lead Practitioners</i>	<i>Headteacher Governors</i>
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>To support the mental health and well being of individuals and groups of students with a robust and school wide approach</i>	<i>Establishing a school based well being centre with a programme of interventions to support different groups</i>	<i>Dec 2016</i>	<i>AHT: Inclusion</i>	<i>Headteacher Governors</i>
√	√	√	√	√	√	√	<i>To continue to improve the support of individuals and pupils undergoing top year and mid year transfer into Ridgewood</i>	<i>To develop the detail and use of use of shared information from Y6 into Y7, creating profiles of students in key groups for teaching staff</i>	<i>September 2017</i>	<i>Deputy Head – Achievement AHT- Inclusion AC / DAC – Year 7 SENDCO</i>	<i>Headteacher Governors</i>

Appendix 1: Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan 2016-2019

iii) Access to the site and buildings

<i>R = Race, D = Disability, G = Gender, SO = Sexual Orientation, A = Age, R/B = Religion or Belief, CC = Community Cohesion</i>							Planned Outcome	Planned Actions	Timescale	To Be Actioned By	Monitored by
R	D	G	SO	A	R/B	CC					
	√					√	<i>To ensure that physical changes to the site, and use of individual buildings allow for wheelchair access and ease of use by those with physical disabilities and visual impairment</i>	<i>To ensure that physical changes meet minimum requirements for wheelchair access To ensure that physical changes to the site do not restrict access to wheelchair ramps across changes of level To ensure that signage is clear and well positioned to support movement around the site, and that new build provision has Braille signage on doors</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Business Manager</i>	<i>Headteacher Governors</i>
	√					√	<i>To ensure that stakeholders with disabilities are able to move confidently and comfortably around the site</i>	<i>Retain a split break and lunch arrangement to reduce the numbers of students travelling between and through buildings at these times Ensure that stakeholders with disabilities have additional time, support and a guide to ensure ease of movement around the site</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Leadership Team</i>	<i>Headteacher Governors</i>
	√					√	<i>To ensure that stakeholders with disabilities are able to access appropriate toilets</i>	<i>Ensure that disabled toilets are marked clearly on maps, and keys are issued to</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>SENDCO</i>	<i>AHT: Inclusion</i>

							<i>during the school day.</i>	<i>stakeholders where required.</i>			
	√					√	<i>To ensure that stakeholders with disabilities have clear and appropriate emergency evacuation routines, and PEEPs where appropriate</i>	<i>Ensure that a small team of TA/associate staff are trained in moving and handling techniques</i> <i>Ensure that alternative assembly points are manned during fire practices and emergency evacuations</i> <i>To ensure that each student requiring this support has a PEEP specific to their need.</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>SENDCO</i> <i>Student Services Lead</i>	<i>AHT: Inclusion</i>

Appendix 2: Summary of Equality Legislation for schools

Introduction

This Appendix summarises the requirements of race, disability and gender equality legislation, and the duty to promote community cohesion. It also addresses the legislation relating to age, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

Every aspect of school life is covered by the above equality duties, including for example:

For Students:

- admissions and attendance
- teaching and learning, timetabling, homework, trips, visits, sports, breaks and lunchtimes, exams, clubs and extracurricular activities, and curriculum development, planning and delivery
- behaviour, discipline and sanctions, exclusions (permanent and fixed term)
- welfare and well-being
- progress and attainment.

Students are defined under the Equality Act 2010 as:

- prospective students (in relation to admissions arrangements)
- students at the school (including those absent or temporarily excluded)
- former students (if there is a continuing relationship based on them having been a student at the school).

For Staff:

- recruitment, selection, conditions of employment
- career progress, appraisal, CPD activities
- disciplinary, grievance, dismissal.

The duties also apply to those using the services of the school, for example parents, and the wider community. The governing body carries the ultimate responsibility for implementing equality legislation.

Meeting these duties

Accessibility

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled students and accessibility which means schools must plan strategically over time to:

- increase access to the curriculum
- make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access;
- make written information accessible to students in a range of different ways.

Schools must ensure that disabled students do not receive less favourable treatment and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

Schools must not discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation or religion and belief. Age is not a protected characteristic for the school's provision in terms of students.

Community cohesion

Schools have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. This duty also includes other differences such as for example in gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Disability equality

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people which means that schools must have due regard to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

Gender equality

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

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap.

Transgender

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. Schools must respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and provide a supportive environment within the school community.

Race equality

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

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to maintained schools, Academies and Student Referral Units. The Duty requires public bodies to demonstrate that they are taking action on equality in policymaking, the delivery of services and public sector employment. The duty requires public bodies to take steps not just to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, but also to actively promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. The duties also require schools to:

- publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Duty
- prepare and publish equality objectives.

Where a school has 150 plus employees, data about these employees as well as student data will need to be published. In a school with fewer than 150 employees, only student related data will need to be published.

Socio-economic duty

A public sector duty applies to 'authorities' who, when making decisions of a strategic nature, must consider how to reduce the inequality of outcomes resulting from socio-economic disadvantage

Equality terminology

The definitions given below relate to the terminology of the Equality Act 2010 and to its particular provisions:

Protected characteristics

The Act protects people from discrimination and harassment based on the following 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability.
- gender reassignment.
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity.
- race.
- religion or belief.
- sex.
- sexual orientation.

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Act as:

- direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association).
- indirect discrimination.
- discrimination arising from disability.
- failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people).

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when you treat a person less favourably than you treat or would treat another person because of a protected characteristic. So a very basic example would be refusing to admit a child to a school as a student because of their race or only allowing male members of staff to drive the school minibus. It is not possible to justify direct discrimination, so it will always be unlawful.

There are however exceptions to the schools provisions that allow, for example, single-sex schools to only admit students of one sex without this being unlawful direct discrimination. There are also limited circumstances in which an employer might be able to make a case for a genuine occupational requirement for a job. For example, a school may be able to restrict applications for a PE teacher from applicants of a specified gender in terms of the duties of the role.

In order for someone to show that they have been directly discriminated against, they must compare what has happened to them to the treatment a person without their protected characteristic is receiving or would receive. They do not need to find an actual person to compare their treatment with but can rely on a hypothetical person if they can show there is evidence that such a person would be treated differently.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when you apply a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) in the same way for all people or for a particular group of people, but this has the effect of putting people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. It doesn't matter that you did not intend to disadvantage those with a particular protected characteristic in this way. What does matter is whether your action does or would disadvantage such people compared with others who do not share that characteristic.

'Disadvantage' is not defined in the Act but may be understood to mean that a reasonable person would consider that disadvantage has occurred. It can take many different forms, such as denial of an opportunity or choice, deterrence, rejection or exclusion. Indirect discrimination will occur if **all** the following four conditions are met:

1. you apply (or would apply) the provision, criterion or practice equally to all, including a person with a protected characteristic, and
2. the provision, criterion or practice puts or would put those sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared to others who do not share that characteristic, and
3. the provision, criteria, practice or rule puts or would put the particular person at a disadvantage, and
4. you cannot show that the provision, criteria of practice is justified as a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Positive action

Those with protected characteristics may be disadvantaged for social or economic reasons or for reasons to do with past or present discrimination. The Act contains provisions that enable schools to take action to tackle the particular disadvantage, different needs or disproportionately low participation of a for example a particular student group, provided certain conditions are met.

These are known as the positive action provisions and allow (but do not require) schools to take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged student group.

Positive action is intended to be a measure that will allow schools to provide additional benefits to some students to address disadvantage and is not the same as positive discrimination. Positive discrimination would be providing preferential treatment for a particular disadvantaged student group that exceeded the positive action conditions. It is never unlawful to treat disabled students (or applicants) more favourably than non-disabled students (or applicants). That is, a school is permitted to positively discriminate in favour of disabled students (applicants).

'Proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'

To be legitimate the aim of the provision, criterion or practice must be legal and non-discriminatory and represent a real objective consideration. In the context of school education, examples of legitimate aims might include:

- maintaining academic and other standards.
- ensuring the health and safety and welfare of students.

Even if the aim is legitimate the means of achieving it must be proportionate. Proportionate means 'appropriate and necessary', but 'necessary' does not mean that the provision, criterion or practice is the only possible way of achieving the legitimate aim. Although the financial cost of using a less discriminatory approach cannot, by itself, provide a justification, cost can be taken into account as part of the school's justification, if there are other good reasons for adopting the chosen practice.

Provision, criterion or practice (PCP)

These are not defined in the Act but can be interpreted widely and include:

- arrangements (for example, for deciding who to admit or in preparing for a school trip)
- the way that education, or access to any benefit, service or facility is offered or provided
- one-off decisions
- proposals or directions to do something in a particular way.

They may be written out formally or they may just have developed as the school worked out the best way of achieving what it wanted to do.

Reasonable adjustments

The reasonable adjustment duty requires steps to be taken to avoid disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage. For students this duty is owed to existing students, applicants and, in limited circumstances, to disabled former students in relation to the following areas:

- deciding who is offered admission as a student
- the provision of education
- access to any benefit, service or facility.

For employees and potential employees the duty to make reasonable adjustments aims to make sure that, as far as is reasonable, a disabled worker has the same access to everything that is involved in doing and keeping a job as a non-disabled person.

Schools cannot justify a failure to make a reasonable adjustment; where the duty arises, the issue will be whether or not an adjustment is 'reasonable' and this is an objective question for the tribunals to ultimately determine.

Appendix 3

Examples of School Activities Contributing to Equalities Best Practice

Student attainment

- Use of RAISE online analysis to track student progress by different groups
- Analysis of outcomes by gender
- Action points arising from analysis of student performance tracking, such as intervention programmes
- Activities for Gifted and Talented children

Addressing prejudice and bullying

- Anti-bullying initiatives
- Use of CCTV to monitor school
- Anti-bullying policy reviewed by all students every year

Students' behaviour

- Daily behaviour tracker in each class and students discuss their ratings with teachers
- All incidents are logged
- Positive behaviours are rewarded through the schools 'Vivo' scheme

Students' attendance

- Attendance initiatives
- Proactive schemes with parents and carers where attendance is an issue
- Close working with the Local Authority Education Welfare team
- Proactive multi agency working

The extent to which students contribute to the school and wider community

- Ensuring clubs are available to everyone and monitor attendance
- Positively promoting the engagement of students through the school's 'House System'
- Using adaptations and reasonable adjustments for sports and PE
- Analysis of extended schools data and ability to access out of school activities

The extent of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- Use of global curriculum
- Assembly themes
- Character Curriculum
- Celebrating and highlight key events, such as Paralympics, Deaf Awareness Week, Learning Disability Week, Disability Awareness Week

The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers

- Parental surveys
- Use of a range of media, such as website and newsletters to keep stakeholders up-to-date
- Analysis of attendance at family learning events held on evenings/weekends
- Clear policy and practice for responses to parental contact
- Agreed standards for staff and parent behaviours through Staff and Parent Code of Conduct

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being

- English as an Additional Language (EAL) services
- ASCETS team (supporting young people with ASD)
- Early Help Hub and CAF?TAC processes
- Liaison with CAMHS and Childrens Social Care
- Multi agency working and training
- Partnership working with outstanding schools locally and nationally
- Cluster meetings to allow schools to come together for training and development

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met

- Single equality scheme action plan cross-referenced with SDP
- Governor curriculum participation – Governor learning walks with HT
- Governor focus meetings
- Robust governor training programmes

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination

- Use of student attainment data to track progress by different equality groups
- Relevant learning experiences through differentiation suited to learning abilities of students
- Non-stereotypical gender activities are actively promoted throughout the curriculum
- All staff are aware of and act upon the schools approach to reporting incidents
- The school gives regular feedback on progress of equality action plan to the school community

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion

- Plan for the future community not just the existing community
- Chair of governing body forms links with community members and involves them in the life of the school

Family, Community and Partnership

- Explain to parents/carers the importance of supporting equality expectations via website, parents evenings, open evenings
- Notice on display in reception/foyer stating equality/respect expectations
- Equality statement given to external providers with school's expectations in relation to equality

Staff and Governors

- CPD log of all staff training activities
- Use statement about commitment to equality on all recruitment materials – job advert, application pack, etc
- Guarantee an interview to any disabled person who applies for a post at school, provided that person meets all the essential criteria on the job and person specification (Positive About Disabled Scheme)