



# **Peacehaven** **Community School**

## **Single Equality Exempla Scheme**

### **(Incorporating Community Cohesion, Disability Equality, Gender Equality and Race Equality Policies)**

This is a working document which will be monitored and reviewed annually. Any comments will be welcomed by the Equalities and Engagement team

This policy has been read and adopted by the Governing Body on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
For and on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Helen Cryer  
Headteacher

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## Section 1

### Introduction

#### The purpose of this document is to:

- provide a practical tool which will support schools in amalgamating their individual policies relating to equalities

Schools can opt to produce a single coherent and meaningful equalities scheme and it is anticipated that, over time, they will work towards this format. Whether separate or joint schemes are produced, they should be cross-referenced within the SIP and specific actions may be included in a range of other documents.

#### Background and influences

Over recent years, schools have (in line with other institutions and public bodies) been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities. Much of this work is in response to new legislation that places an increased duty on schools and other settings. Legislation requires schools both to eliminate direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment and to promote equalities for students, staff and others who use school facilities. These developments reflect the growing awareness of the need to view different equalities strands beneath one umbrella, rather than seeing them as separate factions competing with each other for time and resources.

Furthermore, narrowing (and ultimately closing) the gap between the progress and attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers is central to the Children Plan; Building Brighter Futures<sup>1</sup> and the recognition of diversity and promotion of inclusive and equality practices will be central to achieving this vision.

East Sussex has produced an Equalities Framework for Schools<sup>2</sup> which provides comprehensive background information about legal duties and links with local and national drivers. This is available to download on CZONE.

#### How to use this exemplar scheme

This scheme provides schools with a template from which to develop and customise their own single equality policy. Schools will want to produce a document which accurately reflects their own character, ethos and individuality.

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<sup>1</sup> Building Brighter Futures. Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2007

<sup>2</sup> East Sussex Equalities Framework for Schools 2007

## Section 2

### Peacehaven Community School Single Equalities Scheme

#### Why we have developed this Single Equalities Scheme

This Single Equality Scheme for *Peacehaven Community School* brings together schemes and action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, meeting the statutory duties in these areas. However, it goes far beyond these strands to include sexuality, religion & faith, age and every aspect which has the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community such as against those with special educational needs or potential language barriers. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

Please see PCS Disability Equality Scheme 2006- Oct. 2009.  
PCS Accessibility Plan 2005 – OCT. 2009  
Race Equality Policy  
Inclusion Policy  
All can be found on the staff w drive and/ or on the website.

Our single equalities scheme is inclusive of our whole school community – students, staff, parents/carers and visitors, who have been involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Scheme is to set out how our practice and policies can tackle discrimination, promote inclusive practice and ensure that those in our community requiring extra support receive it.

This scheme will be monitored annually, its impact measured against identified outcomes and reviewed every three years.

#### Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY

Peacehaven has an EDI score of 17.11 compared to 14.75 for Lewes District and 19.74 for SOC. The area has an Economic Activity Rate of 82.5% versus 82% across the South East and 78.6% nationally and is placed in the bottom 20% most deprived areas in England. There are 6228 households with a population of 13594, of which:

- 6% are lone parent households compared to 5.8% for East Sussex and 7.2% for Great Britain.

- 28% of the 0-15 population are identified as 'in poverty' versus 18.5% across East Sussex and 30.25% nationally. One reason for this is likely to be the lack of any large-medium scale employers in the area (PCS is the largest employer). Job Density statistics are 0.74 per person for Peacehaven, 0.86 for East Sussex and 0.83 nationally.
- 17% of the local population are in receipt of benefits (Unemployment, Income Support or Incapacity Benefit) compared to the national average of 7.1%.
- 14% of the local community earn less than national average wage versus 14% in the South East and 10% for Great Britain.
- The town is in the most deprived 10% decile of 2007 IMD SOAs in East Sussex. In addition to the economic challenges facing the community, Peacehaven has higher Primary Care Trust (PCT) average incidences of a variety of healthcare issues:
  - 23% of the population have general healthcare issues compared to 14% across the rest of the PCT
  - 26% of the population are identified as obese compared to 22% for rest of the PCT
  - 10% are receiving treatment for Mental Health problems versus 7.4% across rest of the PCT

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENTS**

The school population is predominantly White British with much less ethnic and religious diversity than is the case nationally. The gender split is marginally higher for boys 51:49. Of the 826 students:

- 91% White British
- 97% have English as home language
- 9.5% receive Free School Meals (FSM)
- 6.5% are on Gifted & Talented register
- 4% have Statement
- 22% are Special Educational Needs (SEN)

### **Overall aims of our scheme**

- To eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity within out school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins. Also to age, gender, social class, disability and sexuality.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life will organise the scheme using the five Every Child Matters themes<sup>3</sup>:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

### **Our approach**

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<sup>3</sup> Every Child Matters DCFS

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Underlying our diversity lies commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness of our cultural mix and look for ways of celebrating and understanding it better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community
- Personal and cultural identity. We recognise that most individuals belong to a range of different groups and that some of these may change over time
- Social and political issues and concepts

### **Our vision statement**

*PCS* seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequalities, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

### **Our duties**

We recognise and accept our duties and responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and promote equality, including the requirement to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.

Our statutory duties are contained within:

- The Equality Bill (introduced to the House of Commons in April 2009)
- Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000

- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Gender Equality Act 2006

They are also guided and shaped by a range of other national and local initiatives such as Every Child Matters – Change for Children<sup>4</sup> and The Children’s Plan<sup>5</sup>.

### **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, students and visitors and contractors are informed about the Single Equality Scheme
- oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school’s actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually, on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the SLT are kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor/ team of governors with specific responsibility for Community Cohesion and the Single Equality Scheme as part of this responsibility
- ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are part of the SIP
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- inform and consult with parents about the scheme
- evaluate and review this scheme every two years

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have general responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this scheme
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the SIP

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the ongoing development of the scheme

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<sup>44</sup> Every Child Matters – Change for Children

<sup>5</sup> The Children’s Plan. Building brighter Futures. Dept of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) 2007

- have access to the scheme through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the scheme
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the scheme
- be informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the ongoing development of the scheme
- be fully aware of the Single Equality Scheme and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Single Equality Scheme
- make known any queries or training requirements

Our students will:

- be involved in the ongoing development of the scheme and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the scheme

### **How we developed our scheme**

The development of this scheme has involved the whole of our school community. We've discussed it with everyone and listened to what they have to say, including:

- Our students

The views of our students have been accessed through Student Council. We have appointed Champions who lead the student body in awareness of equalities issues and in ensuring that we have an inclusive school.

- Our staff

All staff have had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the plan.

- Our school governors

A Governor has been given responsibility for Community Cohesion. These Governors have been involved in the development of the Plan.

- Parents/carers
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The policy will is available on the website and comments and feedback are invited from parents and carers.

- Our partners in the community?

Recorded version of key articles on website  
Documents written according to accessibility guidelines  
We encourage liaison with parents and carers  
(need to think about parents who do not have access to ICT)

- Finally:

The Plan will be available on our website and opportunities given for parents and carers to give ongoing feedback through the website or Parent Drop in sessions. Students, staff, governors, parents/ carers and our partners in the community will be asked to contribute to the review of the plan.

### **How we identify actions attached to the scheme and prioritise them**

We know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. This includes an Equalities Audit.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equalities issues during our inspection. We are required to collect a range of information relating to incidents of racism.

We are also required to complete a Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) which means we are constantly monitoring the make-up and needs of our staff and students – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us less formally or even anonymously.

The Local Education Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equalities agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

We have regular liaison with Anti-bullying service, Inclusive Learning Consultants and East Sussex Equality Advisers and make use of a range of tools eg SEN Self Review Tool to help reflect on or practice.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equalities issues outside of school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

PCS Champions will make links with local partners across the various equalities strands.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required. We can set objectives and assess the effectiveness of the actions we take.

### **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

We use this tool as a common sense measure of determining whether a policy, practice or project will impact on all groups equally or whether it potentially may have a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). It helps us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that positive duties are promoted equally. It is a way to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our students and staff and that diversity, equalities and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

*Further information about EIAs can be found in Appendix 1*

### **Commissioned services (procurement)**

We are increasingly directly responsible for the purchase of some goods and services such as maintenance, cleaning and security. We work closely with the local authority on procurement to ensure that equalities issues are given full regard.

When procuring goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equalities issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment or to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equalities requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equalities policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

### **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society.

We interpret our duties positively, take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

We have, for example, replaced all signs with a sign that includes a visual prompt for students/visitors with language difficulties or EAL. Adapted furniture has been purchased for students and staff with physical disabilities or physical injuries.

### **Responding to equalities-related incidents or situations**

An equalities related incident or situation occurs where a behaviour or an action constitutes, or is perceived by the victim or any other person, to constitute either direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment. We will take action to challenge and eliminate any such behaviour where it is observed, reported or suspected.

We recognise that there are differences between the various equalities strands (e.g. racism has a long and complex history and is a feature of wider society) but we also understand the similarities between each strand both from the victim's perspective & hurt and from the often "hidden" or underhand nature of any attack or discrimination.

We have a legal obligation to collate and report racist incidents. We use this information to identify trends and patterns and we have mechanisms in place to provide support for victims and their families and to manage and change the behaviour of the perpetrator(s). We will also record and monitor incidents relating to the other various equalities strands and provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims (and their families), teaching and learning, sanctions and support for perpetrators and working in partnership with colleagues from other agencies.

Equalities-related incidents and situations are recorded via SIMs, either as a behaviour issue or an event. SIMS gives specific categories for specific forms of bullying.