

School Equality Policy

George Romney Junior School



Approved by:

SMSC Committee

Date: 25th September 2023

Signed:

Jay Lawes.

Next review due by:

25th September 2025

Equality Statement

Our school is a safe and happy place to learn. Our children are nurtured as individuals with different abilities and talents which are celebrated and developed. Our stimulating and reflective curriculum inspires children to ask questions and develop positive attitudes to learning both now and for the future.

Our school fosters positive relationships with everyone in our community. We value the involvement of our parents and families, recognising they are an integral part of their child's learning. At George Romney we understand the importance of belonging and contributing to our local, national and global community.

We encourage our children to grow into responsible citizens and learn the skills and attitudes required for life in the 21st century.

This Equality Policy is intended to respond to the spirit as well as the letter of the Equality Act (2010). The policy recognises that the school has a duty to remove discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, by integrating equality into the school's core priorities and functions.

This Equality Policy will inform our School Development Plan as this will enable us to:

- Demonstrate how promoting equality and eliminating discrimination can help raise standards
- Ensure that equality and diversity are part of the school's core business both as a school and as an employer
- Ensure that our priorities for raising standards support our equality objectives

Our approach to equality is based on 7 key principles

1. All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, economic background, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to background, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties. The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty” This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish annual information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED]
2. Publish Equality objectives and review them at least every 4 years

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

What we do to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to use facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school’s policies on Pupil Discipline & Anti-Bullying and Attendance take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and act promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality: - prejudices around disability and special educational needs - prejudices around race, religion or beliefs - prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.

Staff are made aware of how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

What we do to promote equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. We act to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills. We also ensure children from all groups are challenged to reach higher levels.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability.
- We collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- Our school has accessibility plans that are renewed every 3 years when a significant change has taken place.
- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

Monitoring

- Our attainment records, including attainment and progress of vulnerable groups are monitored.
- Attendance data is scrutinised with specific regard to vulnerable groups
- Data regarding exclusions and behaviour is scrutinised at Governor level
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing school policies
- The implications for equalities in new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced
- Minutes of meetings are kept where equalities issues are discussed
- Carry out and analyse school council meetings to ensure that the child's view is heard

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we;

- Review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires and parents' evening,
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children from the School Council.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body level

Reviewing this policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy every four years and make adjustments as appropriate. Further amendments may occur with changes in legislation or as the need arises.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination and reporting these as appropriate

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, economic background, disability etc.
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will publish this policy on our website to enable them to do this.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- 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.

Publishing the policy

Once approved by the governing body, this policy will be published on the school website. A paper copy is held by the headteacher.

Complaints

Complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be dealt with in line with George Romney Junior Schools complaints procedure.

Appendix 1

Profile of our school: September 2023

There are 44 boys and 45 girls currently on roll. 83 of these are White British and we have 6 children from a range of other backgrounds and ethnicities. One child's first language is Romanian, one child has Russian as first language; one child speaks Cantonese and English at home; one child speaks Japanese and English at home and all the other children speak English as a first language.

There are two accessible toilets in the school, one on each of the different levels/areas of school. Ramps have been installed around the school exterior to enable easier access between the lower and upper junior areas. Handrails have been installed adjacent to all steps in school to help children and visitors with access. There is also a ramp installed by the exterior door of the ICT suite. We have an allocated parking space in the car park.

Our curriculum has been designed around the needs of our children. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against our curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against end of year expectations at several checkpoints throughout the year. Other tests/assessments are completed for specific individuals to provide 'fine level' data in order to assess progress.

The school have considered potential barriers to learning for all children – this is monitored through the 'Vulnerable Children Matrix' on a termly basis. There are currently 29 children on the matrix.

There are currently 18 children accessing SEND provision in school and 6 children with a funded early health care plan.

There are 25 Pupil Premium funded children in school; 22 of whom are currently eligible for FSM. There are 7 children who are considered 'disadvantaged' and also have an identified area of SEND.

We have 1 child who is looked after by the Local Authority.

We have several children in school with specific medical issues; all with individual healthcare plans.

We have a school council which consists of elected members from each class, currently 4 boys and 4 girls, with deputies.