



The Angmering School

Ambition
Courage
Respect

Accessibility, Equality and Equity Policy 2024

Ratified at FGB: 20 March 2024
Next Review due: March 2026

Accessibility, Equality and Equity Policy

Why we have developed this Accessibility, Equality and Equity Policy

This Equality and Equity Policy for The Angmering School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality and Equity Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality and equity of opportunity
- foster good relations between groups, and
- reinforce our core values of ambition, courage and respect
- are evidence informed to ensure best practice and procedure are implemented

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of all protected characteristics of the population.

The Angmering School is a medium to large sized comprehensive school and sixth form. The population is mainly white British, although other ethnicities and languages make up a small population within the school community. There is a small minority of BIPOC and GRT students. We have a variety of faiths represented in the school and we have a proportion of students who identify as LGBTQIA + , which has increased in recent years. The school also has a higher than national average proportion of students who have SEND, with special designation to support students who have physical disabilities, hearing impairments or visual impairments through the Lavinia Norfolk Centre (a West Sussex SSC).

Overall aims of our Accessibility, Equality and Equity Policy

To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

- To promote equity of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.

- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds and with different protected characteristics.
- To promote cohesion in the wider community.

To ensure that equalities, equity and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality and Equity Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes¹.

Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected within this policy.

Our approach

We seek to embed equity 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. Identifying commonalities and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equity and equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social and cultural cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality and inequity that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.
- To actively integrate themes of inclusion across all school structures, to enrich and diversify student experience

We communicate this through our Vision and Values:

Everyone has a voice in our school and that voice is valued. Every student has the opportunity to take on leadership roles and the opportunity to change the school. By Year 11 the Leadership team has two Head Prefects and two Deputies, along with a body of prefects. These students drive our Empowerment Council and will be represented at Headship Group meetings so that the suggestions from the student body can be represented and real change can happen.

¹ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

Our rights and responsibilities as citizens are central to everything we do. The Empowerment Council is composed of democratically elected student representatives (ambassadors) who represent the voice of key groups and themes within the school (and wider) community.

We are a community at The Angmering School, and we respect and value our similarities and our differences.

The aim of our community is clear – to prepare our students for the world they are growing into, so that they grasp the opportunities offered to them and are not limited by the choices they make as children.

In order to share our core values of ambition, respect and courage, we have defined a Commitment Charter to outline what students at The Angmering School should expect from staff. This is detailed below.

Through everything we do we will promote ambition, respect and courage.

Ambition

We will plan for outstanding progress and take account of the needs of all learners. All members of the school community will be encouraged to meet their aims and be the best they can be.

Respect

Everything we do will be bound by kindness, respect, fairness, equality and equity. Understanding of fundamental rights, British values and a culture of integrity will underpin and drive this approach.

Courage

Everyone will be given opportunities for leadership and to take on new roles and responsibilities. We will challenge you all to overcome your barriers and be brave in learning from your mistakes.

Our vision statement about Equality

The Angmering School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, driven by relationships and restorative justice, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, 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 to 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, there needs to be the utmost regard for equitable practice.

The Angmering School looks to embed the Therapeutic Approach within practice and strategies to ensure a context driven framework reflects our equitable ethos.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences. This will enable us to promote understanding and learning to create cohesive communities.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all². We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child³

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key values and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities:

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- staff training
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- teaching and learning
- the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum

² See Appendix A for further information about legislation

³ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

- school sports
- employee and staff welfare

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Headteacher and Headship Team will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality and Equity Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Headship Team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

Our governing body will:

- Appoint a designated governor as the designated governor with specific responsibility for the Equality and Equity Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the Headship Team in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy as necessary
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

Our students will:

- become involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability as the role of the Student Council develops
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy.
- be given learning opportunities that are in line with the Policy
- be challenged to reflect on their actions when they contravene this Policy under our drive towards restorative practices
- be subject to the Behaviour Policy when further contraventions of this Policy take place.

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Our staff will:

- become involved in the development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality and Equity Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school and wider societal issue and both support and actively promote the Equality and Equity Policy
- challenge and report any behaviours and actions that are in contravention of this policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- become involved in the development of the Policy
- be encouraged to support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.

How we will measure the impact and efficacy of our Policy - Using information

We will use data and other information about our school, and Equality Impact assessments (EQIAs) as a common sense measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. EQIAs will help us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They will help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They will help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality, equity and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

In addition, 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. We ask our parents to complete Parent Views on a regular basis. We send out surveys to staff, students and parents/carers about wellbeing and record and analyse bullying and hate incidents, as well as first aid incidents, acting accordingly in line with this information.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality and equity issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to any protected characteristics.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously. We have an Empowerment Council that provides an effective mechanism for listening to and acting upon Student Voice.

There are termly meetings with Staff Union representatives.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. These include the Learning and Behaviour Advisory Team, health partners, the West Sussex Young Persons Substance Misuse Service, District or Borough Councils, Sussex Police, Children's Centres, Early Help, the Pupil Entitlement Investigation Team, the West Sussex Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Service, Allsorts and the West Sussex Special Educational Needs and Assessment Team.

We have established good links with our local and wider community, including all of the primary schools in our locality. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality and equity issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school. We also have strong links with the other schools in Area South with monthly meetings that address equality and equity issues.

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.

Commissioned services (buying in services)

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality and equity issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

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

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

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, learning support assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. 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. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure⁴.

⁴ Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

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.

Our staff team regularly undertake training to help them understand their equality and equity duties and/or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.

We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by ignorance, negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour in line with the relevant legislation, our own staff code of conduct and behaviour policy. This will be done on a case by case basis, with a restorative and educational approach employed where appropriate to do so.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference, e.g. skin colour or disability. We look to nurture and educate, to resolve such ideals that cause harm to others.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society and its influence on our culture, values and rituals should be celebrated as such. We believe it is vital to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses as part of our restorative ethos.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities. We respond to incidents as set out in the Behaviour Policy.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This policy was published in September 2019 and reviewed in January 2022 and March 2024. It will be actively promoted and disseminated, via the school website and termly newsletter.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Headship Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

On a yearly basis, we will analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups. We will continue to report to parents via the weekly newsletter and to students via our Student voice mechanisms.

Appendix A: Key legislation

Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information: <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00215460/equality-act-2010departmental-advice> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

Accessibility planning

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy.

Schools must plan for:

- increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- improving access to the physical environment of schools, and

- improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.

Auxiliary aids and services

We acknowledge our duty to provide auxiliary aids as part of the reasonable adjustment duty for all schools as from September 2012.

The school and the Local Authority acknowledge our reasonable adjustment duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to children with disabilities' educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under an EHCP, or where the EHCP does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006

General duty:

- to promote community cohesion.

Specific duties:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Appendix B: Process for the development and review of Equality and Equity Policy and action plan

Form an equality and equity working party. Membership to be drawn from across the school community and should include:

- School staff (including governors and Headship)
- Wider school community
- Parents and carers
- Students/pupils

Propose a date for formal presentation and adoption by the governing body.

Draw up a timetable for the development of the policy identifying meeting dates.

Consider local and national guidance.

Key Tasks (with deadlines):

- Action Plan
- Appropriate Staff training
- Equality and Equity Policy
- Assign named staff to collect data and information including the views of all in the school community
- Assign one person to write-up the school context section of the policy
- Consider further involvement of those representing the various equality strands.
- Use EQIA (see Appendix C)
- Gather all information specific to the school
- Consider all existing equality and equity schemes and policies and include identified actions in the action plan.
- Draft or review the Equality and Equity Policy
- Devise Action Plan redraft as required.

ONGOING:

- Monitor action plan and gather evidence for outcomes.
- Present policy and action plan to governors/ratified by governors.
- Action Plan review date set.
- Make sure the policy and action plan are effectively communicated to the whole school community.
- Consider producing summary versions for students/pupils and parents/carers.
- Ongoing staff training.

Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA)

A suggested approach for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments in schools.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An EQIA is a considered way of analysing the effect of a policy, practice or project on protected groups equally or whether it potentially may have a disproportionate effect on one or more particular groups.

EQIAs should help us ensure we are not unlawfully discriminating against certain individuals or groups and that we are promoting our positive duties on equality. It is a way to ensure we are meeting the diverse needs of all our pupils and staff.

EQIAs should help ensure that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

This does not mean undertaking EQIAs for all policies and practices as of now. It is a process of thinking that can be included in the review of policies as part of the policy review cycle. EQIAs can also be considered for all new policies and specific projects, e.g. use of the school playground.

It is not about more paperwork. It is a common sense approach to thinking about what effect policies and actions will have on race, disability, sex and other protected groups. The effect could be positive, neutral or negative.

If the effect on different groups is not justifiable, what solutions can we come up with to overcome this situation?

Key questions:

- What are the aims of the policy, practice or project?
- What are the specific outcomes you hope to see?
- Who are the intended beneficiaries of this policy or practice? (e.g. all staff/students?)
- Can you identify any potential adverse or negative effects/impacts in the implementation of this policy, practice or project for certain individuals or groups – on the basis of their ethnic origin, cultural background, faith, disability, SEN, sex, sexual orientation, age, and other criteria (for example EAL, asylum seekers)?
- Identify whom and how?
- Are there any positive effects/impacts? On whom and how?
- What evidence do you have to inform your thinking? This can include data, e.g. attainment data.
- If you think there may be a negative effect or impact on certain individuals or groups it is important to draw together relevant, reliable data and information.
- Who can you involve in your policy/practice review or project proposal which will help you identify any differential effect/impact?

Involving the children, young people, staff and members of the community who may be affected by your policy, practice or project will provide the best opportunity of identifying impact, exploring solutions and supporting implementation.

If you have thought through the effects/impact of a policy or action and involved people in this thinking, you may still not have uncovered the likely differential effect/impact on certain individuals or groups. That is OK, that will happen. The point is to bear this in mind in the monitoring and review process and allow flexibility to respond to new information.