



# Brookfields School

## Single equality plan

Adopted: September 2022

Review date: September 2026

Brookfields School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination (direct or indirect), and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

This single equality plan (Plan) sets out how the school will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act to eliminate all discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). The school aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Brookfields School Academy Council with the help of the school staff in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the admissions policy, anti-bullying policy and the behaviour policy.

Through the creation of this Plan, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. The current summary of equality-based actions being undertaken by the school is set out in annex A. This Plan will be reviewed at least every four years, or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

### School profile

Brookfields School caters for children with severe and complex needs and currently has 120 children on roll. Pupils can join the school at any age but the majority join in Reception. 57% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is above the national average. This reflects the high level of social deprivation found within areas that the school serves; Halton was 39<sup>th</sup> from 317 local authorities for the average level of deprivation across the area (2019). All pupils bar one come from the borough of Halton.

The school has almost four times as many boys as girls. We make particular provision that takes account of this, including choices of teaching and learning strategies, carefully considered selections of learning resources and additional enrichment. Almost 7% of our pupils have English as an additional language.

A small percentage of pupils are Looked after Children (4 children) and there are an additional 10% approximately of pupils at any one time who are subject to a MAP, or are at CIN or CP level. The school currently is supporting an additional 25% of children at a school led Family Support level which acts as an early support to these children / families.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The Headteacher has the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this Plan.

### **The Academy Council**

The Academy Council will:

- create and approve this Plan with the help of the Headteacher and staff and ensure that is adopted correctly throughout the school
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives as set out in this Plan
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan on a regular basis and make any amendments to improve on the Plan when and where necessary
- nominate a named Academy Councillor to oversee the implementation of the Plan, monitor equality outcomes, and regularly report back to the rest of the Academy Council.
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this Plan which could directly affect their child
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community on the progress of the Plan through the schools website

### **The headteacher and senior leadership team**

The headteacher, with the support of the rest of the senior leadership team, will:

- promote the Plan both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- report back to the Academy Council on how the Plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs.

### **Staff**

School staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this Plan and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils

- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed, and action taken where necessary.

## **Pupils**

Pupils at the school at a level appropriate to the child's ability and level of understanding will be encouraged to:

- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger pupils and their peers.

## **Parents, carers, and visitors**

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with this Plan and support the Plan by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to this Plan
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- respect and follow this Plan when visiting the school.

## **Key groups at risk**

Whilst the school recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Gender and transgender**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Sexual orientation**

You can find all the information about our school's SEN provision including our provision for inclusion [and reasonable adjustments] in the school's SEN Information Report and the school's Accessibility Plan.

Through the relevant policies (including PSHE, RSE, RE, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Curriculum), our bespoke curriculum and inclusive school ethos, we shall make provision to address any potential inequalities, to develop understanding and to celebrate difference.

The school is committed to better understanding the profile of our school community and making any adjustments to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all and treating everyone equally.

As a school we were awarded the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. UNICEF works with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. Our Rights Respecting Schools Award embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens.

## **Promoting equality and social awareness in school and within the local community**

### **Community cohesion**

The school expects all its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of. Activities undertaken that promote community cohesion include:

- Educational visits within the local area
- Opening up school to members of the local community; e.g. for events, inclusion activities, open evening
- Inviting visitors into school to run workshops and activities
- Raise awareness of the needs of others through Unicef Rights of the Child
- Participating in local /national events such as Fairtrade Fortnight, Harvest collection for Foodbank, Macmillan Coffee morning
- Parents and family members encouraged to be actively involved in the school community
- Parents wellbeing supported and promoted
- Dementia awareness raised through care home project
- Joint School Council / Enterprise events with SLD schools from across Merseyside.

### **Inclusion**

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds.

### **Pupil voice**

Through our support of student voice, we encourage our pupils to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between pupils from different year groups, pupils and staff, and pupils and the wider community. Within our school we undertake following to attain and promote pupil voice: -

- Total Communication Approach supported by high quality staff training and work with other agencies
- Consistent behaviour approach and clear school rules
- School Council
- Rights Respecting Schools Focus Group
- Pupil survey

- Available intervention / support by Family Support Worker, Speech and Language Therapy Assistant, Art Therapist etc.
- Focus on developing self-help skills and an understanding of caring for our environment – recycling, letter collection
- Inter-school activities
- Nurture approach / focus upon developing emotional wellbeing / resilience
- Assemblies / collective workshop activities

## **Recruitment**

Brookfields School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Brookfields School acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in this Plan is the foundation for all its activities.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

## **Staff**

Equal opportunities for staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made because of merit and ability and in compliance with the law
- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible
- 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 including the duty to make reasonable adjustments
- 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.

## **Staff discipline and suspension**

Brookfields School is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and anyone not adhering to these values is held to account through our staff discipline, conduct, and grievance policy.

The education and wellbeing of our pupils is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our pupils will be disciplined. The school's staff appraisal policy provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and

grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

## **Behaviour, exclusions and attendance**

The school behaviour policy takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with SEN and disabilities. We closely monitor data on absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and will act to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Read our school attendance, behaviour and exclusions policies for more information on the processes surrounding these topics.

## **The curriculum**

At Brookfields we endorse a Curriculum for Life, a belief that is supported by our parents and all stakeholders. We provide a curriculum that promotes communication, independence and the development of self-help skills. We recognise that each pupil should be respected as an individual, of equal status and value, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, disability or learning difficulty. We believe that this should be evident in the curriculum we provide.

Our Curriculum is designed to:

- make connections between areas of learning in ways which relate to developing independence and key skills for life
- promote and facilitate communication skills
- provide learning activities that are motivating and meaningful and where skills are acquired in a flexible manner
- develop a culture where achievements are shared and celebrated
- employ specific teaching approaches to address each child's individual learning style
- include autism specific approaches to learning
- work in partnership with parents
- enable pupils to engage with learning so they remain committed to learning throughout their school lives and into adulthood
- provide broad and balanced learning experiences that meet statutory requirements
- follow the six principles of Nurture

We intend to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens.

## **Monitoring and review**

This Plan will be reviewed at least every four years by the Academy Council, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation). Academy Councillors will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Academy Councillors will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and pupils, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

## **Information will be gathered through:**

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor this Plan. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups
- children's and young peoples' views, actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution
- uptake of the extended school offer by group
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue
- data on the recruitment, development, and retention of employees
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage.

Termly the headteacher will provide monitoring reports for review by the Academy Council. These will include:

- progress against targets relating to equality and future plans
- school population
- recruitment and retention
- key initiatives.

## **Outcomes**

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Where robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment will be carried out and an action plan put in place to aid these outcomes. Action plans will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- clear timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- resource implications
- specified dates for review.

## **Equality impact assessments**

Impact assessments are carried out as part of the review of all school policies and assess whether school policies or plans are having a negative or adverse, or positive impact on groups and individuals within the school community.

## **Reporting on our progress**

Reporting will take place on a termly basis to Academy Councillors as part of the Data Dashboards.

An annual report will be provided to all stakeholders outlining a review against key elements of this plan.

**Signed by**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chair of Academy Council** **Date: .....**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Headteacher** **Date: .....**

**This Plan will be reviewed:**

- at regular intervals (*recommended review period is four years*)
- after incidents that relate to, or impact on, equality in school
- after any significant changes to workplace, working practices or staffing.

## Annex A

| Protected Characteristic | Action to be taken  | How it will be monitored   | Who is responsible for implementation       | Timeframes                       | Early Success Indicators   |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|--|
| All                      | Publish and promote equality plan on website, newsletters etc.  | Include reference in annual survey of parents/staff                                      | Headteacher                                 | Ongoing with review after survey | Staff aware of aims of policy and implement them throughout school. Parents acknowledge plan and question impact in survey |
| All                      | Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils | Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability                                 | Head teacher / Academy Council              | Termly                           | Analysis of teacher assessments / termly data demonstrates no gap between groups being monitored.                          |
| All                      | To identify an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead (EDI); to engage in school and Trust wide initiatives.  | Through SET wide monitoring against DEI Strategy objectives<br>School based survey - EDI | Headteacher<br>EDI lead<br>SET Central team | EDI Strategy 2022-2025           | Positive responses in staff / parents survey<br>Review of activities undertaken<br>Positive outcomes for all pupils        |