

# School Equality Scheme

2018-2021

Oxhey Early Years Centre



Inspiring individuals to learn and  
thrive in a nurturing and welcoming environment

Policy reviewed by Governing Body: April 2018

Date for next review: March 2021

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## 1: Vision and Values

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### Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

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The purpose of our Single Equality Scheme (SES) is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for members of all the 'equality strand' groups, and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our community and in all aspects of our policies, procedures and practices (PPPs). We recognise within this Scheme those groups in our community, who are currently not covered by existing equalities legislation but face inequality through poverty and socio-economic factors.

At Oxhey Early Years Centre we are committed to ensuring equality of provision, education and opportunity for all children, families, staff, parents and carers receiving services from our services, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the Centre feel proud of their identity and able to participate in Centre life. At Oxhey Early Years Centre, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who work, learn, teach and visit here.

The achievement of children will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support children, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all.

In fulfilling the legal obligations in Section 3 (of the Equality Act 2010), we are guided by the following principles:

#### Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity.

#### Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same.

- Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:
  - disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
  - ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
  - gender, so that the different needs and experience of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
  - religion, belief or faith background
  - sexual identity.

### Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

### Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

### Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

in addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

### Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations and preferences: LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community.

### Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations and preferences: LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community.

## Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7). The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

## 2: School Context

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### The characteristics of our school

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Oxhey Early Years Centre is a Hertfordshire County Council maintained Nursery School that is led by a head teacher and staffed by qualified teachers and practitioners. We also run our own Day Care company, Oxhey Early Years Centre Ltd, that provides additional hours, holiday care and paid and funded places for 2-3 year olds.

We are an inclusive school that works in partnership with families and with professionals from other disciplines to support all our children to reach their full potential. We are “welcoming, involving and evolving” and provide many opportunities for parents to engage in their child’s learning and development.

Our Nursery School is rated outstanding by OFSTED and in our most recent report (Jan 2017) the inspector noted that:

“The nursery provides a wonderful place for children to play, develop and make friends. A highly stimulating environment provides excellent opportunities for children to learn across all areas of learning, both indoors and outside.”

Children come to the nursery from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and cultures. Data from Oxhey Group CC shows that there are 7 LSOAs (areas with the most vulnerable families) within the area surrounding the Centre and 4 of these are in the most deprived quintile. Under 5’s within LSOAs are spread across the deprivation quintiles as below (data from Oxhey CC group March 2018)

	Most deprived quintile	2 <sup>nd</sup> most deprived	3 <sup>rd</sup> most deprived	4 <sup>th</sup> most deprived	Least deprived
No of under 5’s in Sunshine CC area	157	359	239	167	156

Sunshine children’s centre area has 54.4% of children of school age from a BME group – data from 2016 census. Gujerati, Romanian and Polish are the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> home languages after English. 73% of family, in the Oxhey Group area, have English as their first language.

The number of children in the CC area with EHC plans has increased by 75% from 2016 to 2017.

### 3: Legal Background

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#### The duties that underpin our scheme

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Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

#### **General Duty under the Equality Act 2010:**

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

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

#### ***The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)***

#### ***The specific duties require schools to:***

- *Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.*
- *To set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.*

#### ***Protected Characteristics***

*The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:*

- *age (for staff only)*
- *disability*
- *ethnicity and race*
- *gender (sex)*
- *gender identity and reassignment*
- *pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding*
- *religion and belief*
- *sexual orientation*

## Disability

At Oxhey Early Years Centre we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

**Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs.**

**These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.**

## Community Cohesion

- Community Cohesion supports good practice in educating pupils / students about equality and diversity. It contributes to the school's efforts to provide a broad, balanced, curriculum.

## 4: Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

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### Chain of accountability

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The Board of Governors, supported by the Head and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

### Commitment to implementation

Head of Centre: Rachel Fagan retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively.

HT termly updates for Governing Body will include information and data on equality and diversity issues.

All staff are responsible for delivery the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Key Person</b>
Single equality scheme	Head of Centre
Disability equality (including bullying incidents)	Head of Centre
SEN/LDD (including bullying incidents)	Head of Centre
Accessibility	Head of Centre
Gender equality (including bullying incidents)	Head of Centre

Racist equality (including racist incidents)	Head of Centre
Equality and diversity in curriculum content	Head of Centre
Equality and diversity in pupil achievement	Head of Centre
Equality and diversity – behaviour and exclusions	Head of Centre
Participation in all aspects of school life	Head of Centre
Impact assessment	Head of Centre
Engagement / Stakeholder consultation	Head of Centre
Policy review	Head of Centre
Communication and publishing	Head of Centre

### Commitment to review

The school equality scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes.

**The basic principle underlying the new specific duties is that of 'transparency' which ensures that we fulfil the aims of the Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. Transparency means being open about the information on which we base our decisions, on what to publish and how.**

### Commitment to publish

At Oxhey Early Years Centre the full policy will be available on the website.

At Oxhey Early Years Centre we will:

- Ensure that policies avoid discrimination and other prohibited conduct
- Collect attainment data which shows how children with different characteristics are performing
- Act on data analysis if it reveals that certain groups are underperforming
- Ensure our curriculum explores different cultures and promotes understanding of different religions
- Be involved with the local community
- Support our children to understand that other children come from different backgrounds
- Be prepared to explore and improve relationships between different groups of children within the school community, if the need arises

### Commitment to action

#### **Governors will:**

Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the schools equality and other policies</li> </ul>
Policy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Head of Centre and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community</li> </ul>
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils</li> <li>• Congratulate examples of good practice from the school and among individual managers, staff and pupils</li> <li>• Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases, discrimination and racist incidents</li> </ul>
Public Sector Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties (and ensuring the provision of 'returns' to the local authority)</li> </ul>

### **Head of Centre and senior staff will:**

Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures</li> <li>• Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies</li> </ul>
Policy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders</li> <li>• Ensure that managers and staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies</li> <li>• Oversee the effective implementation of the policies</li> <li>• Hold line managers accountable for effective policy implementation</li> </ul>
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils</li> <li>• Highlight good practice from departments, individual managers, staff and pupils</li> <li>• Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice</li> <li>• Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases, discrimination and racist incidents</li> </ul>
Public Sector Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the school carries out its statutory details effectively</li> </ul>

### **All staff: teaching and non-teaching will:**

Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to consultations and reviews</li> <li>• Raise issues with line managers which could contribute to policy review and development</li> </ul>
Policy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures</li> <li>• Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils</li> </ul>
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme</li> <li>• Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases, discrimination and racist incidents</li> </ul>
Public Sector Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme</li> </ul>

The Nursery and Day Care operate equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our children with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of children and families;
- Take account of the achievement of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all children and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the setting, population and local community in terms of the Protected Characteristics, e.g. race and ethnicity, religion and belief, gender, or disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's development and education;
- Encouraging whole centre discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning and development;

### **Admissions and exclusions**

- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability, family background or socio-economic factors.
- Exclusions will always be based on the Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **Equality and Staff**

- We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, nursery nurses, early years' practitioners, admin staff, MSA's) 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 a person who is not disabled. This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, environment, access to information, 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 will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.
- We will provide training for staff to enable them to deal effectively with prejudice-related incidents.
- We will tackle discrimination and will record all forms of prejudice-related incidents for example racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism.

## **5: Engagement**

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## Involving our learners, parents/carers and others

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We have welcomed the participation and involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities. The Centre uses questionnaires, feedback sheets, report documents to ascertain the views of stakeholders. This has influenced policy and procedures and the development of additional services.

When deciding what to do to tackle specific equality issues, we will consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions – parents, children, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the setting's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations. Evidence of this engagement will be included in published information showing how the duty has been addressed.

Examples of practice that regularly take place:

- Through the Admissions process parents/carers are asked to inform us about their child's ethnic origin, religion, languages spoken or heard, and disabilities. This and any other information about the child or family circumstances can be discussed in confidence.
- Opportunities for Home Visits before starting.
- Parent questionnaires - termly.
- Children's voice questionnaires (before termly consultation) and photographs in learning journals.
- Regular celebrations of major festivals.
- Staff and governors contributions available in meeting minutes.
- Herts Improvement Partner termly visits and reports.
- Contacts with relevant community and voluntary groups.
- SEN family and children meetings.
- Regular Newsletters and learning overviews.
- Regularly updated Website.

6: Using Information – Equality Impact Assessment, data and other information

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## Evaluating the impact in terms of the outcomes

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Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) help us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). EQIAs help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted.

We collect a range to information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.

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

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors. This information can be ascertained from files kept by CBM (Centre Business Manager)

## 7: Our School's Equality Objectives

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### Key priorities for action

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#### **Group A Bringing equality procedures and practices into line with Equality Act**

- Ensure all new policies give due consideration to equality requirements
- Ensure staff are updated/trained annually in aspects of equality
- Ensure disadvantaged children, (CLA, 2yoff, EYPP) are supported at Oxhey to reduce disadvantage and diminish the difference
- Summarise data to identify groups with gaps in achievement in nursery and day care (Boy/girl, SEND, EAL, BME, EYPP, 2yoff)

#### **Group B Specific measurable objectives to improve provision**

- To improve the attainment and progress of EYPP pupils throughout the school