



Equality Report 2017

Contents

Introduction.....	p2
National and Local Context:	
Girls and Boys.....	p3
Ethnicity.....	p3
Disabled Pupils and SEN Pupils – Attainment Data.....	p3
SEN and Socio-economic Disadvantage.....	p4
Faith and Belief.....	p4
English as an Additional Language (EAL).....	p5
Sexual Orientation/Different Families/Gender Identity.....	p6
Equality Objectives – review of the last 12 months:	
Objective 1.....	p8
Objective 2.....	p8
Objective 3.....	p8
Objective 4.....	p8
Objective 5.....	p8

Introduction

Rowdeford School is committed to providing a safe and vibrant learning environment for its diverse population of pupils. Rowdeford is a Special School and is a centre of excellence both for our pupils with special educational needs as well as the mainstream schools we support.

Rowdeford encourages our pupils to be caring, and to respect and value themselves and others; to appreciate different cultures, traditions and attitudes in society, and to understand that conflict may be resolved restoratively. This is part of the important role we play in preparing our pupils to lead a fulfilling life once they have left school.

Good education plays a vital part in improving opportunities for pupils with special educational needs, and provides opportunities that help them to understand and relate to wider society. This document details the steps Rowdeford is taking to ensure that all our pupils achieve their potential and participate in society as fully as they are able.

Rowdeford recognises that many factors can exacerbate poor educational outcomes for young people, such as having a disadvantaged home life; being looked after; being a young person with caring responsibilities; experiencing the bereavement of a close family member, etc. This document is about pupils who are vulnerable to poor educational outcomes because of inequality in society, and refers largely to the areas that have been identified as 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010. Other issues of vulnerability affecting the educational outcomes of children and young people will be addressed elsewhere in school policy.¹

¹ *School Improvement Plan*

This document begins with an overview of equality data in maintained special schools both nationally and locally (in Wiltshire), then continues with Rowdeford-specific data. Rowdeford's commitment to equality of opportunity is outlined by a summary of the work which has been undertaken in the previous twelve months as well as the steps we are proposing to take in the year ahead. National priorities relating to equality issues regularly change. These shifts in emphasis are usually because of national priorities and the government response to these. Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have at least one Equality Objective that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years.

National and Local Context (Maintained Special Schools)

Across England, the overall number of pupils with special educational needs has reduced from 1,301,445 in 2015 to 1,228,785 in 2016. Across schools in England, 236,805 pupils have a statement of special educational needs or EHC plan. This is an increase of 640 since 2015, but remains equal to 2.8 per cent of the total pupil population. ⁽ⁱ⁾

Across schools in England, 991,980 pupils receive SEN support. This is equal to 11.6 per cent of the total pupil population. ⁽ⁱ⁾

The most common types of education support need are: 26.8 per cent of pupils with SEN support have Moderate Learning Difficulty as a primary type of need; 25.9 per cent of pupils with a statement or EHC plan have Autism Spectrum Disorder as a primary type of need. Statements or EHC plans are most prevalent at age 15, where 3.9% of pupils have a statement or EHC plan. ⁽ⁱ⁾

Girls and Boys

Special educational needs remain more prevalent in boys than girls. 4.0% of boys have a statement or EHC plan compared to 1.5% girls. This has fallen slightly from 4.1% boys and 1.6% girls in 2015. ⁽ⁱ⁾

Boys with a statement or EHC plan are more likely to have Autism Spectrum Disorder as a primary type of need than girls. 30.0% of boys with a statement or EHC plan have this primary type of need compared with 14.8% of girls. ⁽ⁱ⁾

Ethnicity

National data shows the most common type of need for pupils with a statement or EHC plan is the same for all the ethnic groups i.e. Autism Spectrum Disorder. However, data shows there are some differences between the ethnic groups. Travellers of Irish heritage and black Caribbean pupils had the highest proportion of pupils with statements or EHC plans (4.7 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively). Indian pupils had the lowest percentage of pupils with statements or EHC plans at 1.9 per cent, compared with 2.8 per cent of All Pupils nationally. The link between socio-economic deprivation means care must be taken when looking at the prevalence of SEN in different ethnic groups as research shows that once levels of deprivation are considered there is little difference between the groups. ⁽ⁱ⁾

Disabled Pupils and SEN Pupils – Attainment Data

In Wiltshire 5.8 per cent of pupils with a statement or an EHC plan achieved A*-C GCSE's in maths and English while nationally 10.5 per cent achieved the same.

Nationally, 38.5 per cent of pupils with a statement or an EHC Plan who attend Special Schools achieved at least one pass at GCSE or equivalent. ⁽ⁱ⁾

There is an increasing understanding of the negative impact of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) on the educational attainment of pupils. The incorporation of mental health into the Equality Act 2010 has helped to highlight this important issue. Rowdeford School set one of its Equality Objectives in 2015 to: 'address pupil mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to preventing mental health difficulties that may start in childhood but have a greater impact in adult life'. This objective has run for 2 years (see below for progress) and work is now embedded so it is proposed that this objective will conclude at the end of August 2017.

SEN and Socio-economic Disadvantage

Pupils with SEN remain more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those without SEN (27.2% compared to 12.1%)⁽ⁱ⁾ Pupils with statements or EHC Plans are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils with SEN support (13.5% compared to 26.2%)⁽ⁱ⁾. This is a particular issue for Special Schools as national data shows that pupils eligible for free school meals comprise 36.5% of the pupil population in Special Schools compared to 13.2% in state-funded secondary schools, and 14.6% in state-funded primary schools. ⁽ⁱ⁾ Pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health as their primary type of need are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils with any other primary type of need. Nationally, 42 per cent of pupils with a statement or EHC plan with this type of need were identified as eligible for free school meals. ⁽ⁱ⁾

The most prevalent categories of SEN (Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Moderate Learning Difficulty) are the most strongly associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Some categories have a significant but lower level of association (Severe Learning Difficulties; Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties; Physical Disability; Multi-Sensory Impairment; Specific Learning Difficulties; Speech, Language and Communication Needs) and others have a weak relationship with socio-economic disadvantage (Autism Spectrum Disorder; Hearing Impairment; Visual Impairment).⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Information about the steps our school is taking to address equality in educational outcomes for this group is detailed in our published Pupil Premium Information.

Faith and Belief

Data is not collected for monitoring purposes on Religion and Belief, so there is no information available to compare the attainment of pupils who have/or do not have a religion or a belief.

Rowdeford School recognises how important faith and belief can be as part of a young person's developing identity, whether this relates to a particular faith or belief, or whether this relates to wider belief systems, and moral ethics.

Rowdeford School is committed to supporting all our young people as they develop a personal relationship with their particular set of values and beliefs, and to supporting, in the context of the Human Rights agenda, the role this plays in the moral and ethical choices they make in life.

This school takes incidents of prejudice-related bullying seriously and is committed to working closely with parents/carers to create a school environment which is nurturing, friendly and supportive for all our children. Our school has established a procedure for recording all incidents of prejudice-based bullying and this includes bullying relating to religion and belief.

Wiltshire LA Anti-bullying Guidance specifically states that Religious Bullying can be identified as '*a negative or unfriendly focusing on religious difference or how somebody expresses their faith*'. This school is vigilant in maintaining an awareness of, and appropriate responses to, this possibility. Rowdeford School is aware that negative faith-based media attention can have an impact on all children, and recognises the importance of ensuring that pupils are provided with accurate and appropriate information.

Rowdeford School ensures all pupils gain knowledge of and respect for the different faiths in Britain as part of our role to prepare pupils for modern life in a diverse society. In our PSHRE lessons, we also explore Humanism. As part of whole school activity, pupils have the opportunity to celebrate Harvest and Remembrance and to participate in presentations at the Christmas Carol services.

Rowdeford School recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern, and our school actively promotes tolerance and respect.

Rowdeford School is currently working towards the following Equality Objective: to increase understanding of religious/faith diversity (including people who do not have a faith) and to learn to promote tolerance and understanding. This objective has been in place since 2015 and will continue until August 2018, at which time it will be reviewed

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) continues to work with Wiltshire schools to secure the achievement of EAL learners, and other learners. This includes work with individual children to assess, identify needs and recommend and support provision. It includes support from Bilingual Assistants both in the classroom and to help establish productive home-school partnerships. The Wiltshire Ethnic Minority Achievement Service is able to provide support for all pupils who have English as an Additional Language and works closely with the minority ethnic communities/families living in Wiltshire.

In addition, the service works at a more strategic level. Recent work has included:

- providing training to specific groups including Newly Qualified Teachers, Early Years Practitioners and other school staff to equip them with the skills and knowledge to meet learner's needs.
- hosting "bilingual conferences" for multilingual children to come together, learn how to develop their skills, and gain in self-confidence and respect.

EMAS believes that Wiltshire schools will also benefit more widely from strategies used with learners of EAL, as it is recognised that a focus on language and communication skills can benefit a broad range of students. This belief has recently been bolstered by the findings of Professor Steve Strand in *English as an Additional Language (EAL) and educational*

achievement in England, who showed that an increase in the number of EAL learners in a school is associated with improved attainment by English first language children.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

There are currently no pupils on roll at Rowdeford for whom English is an additional language. However, through our alternative provision work with mainstream schools, it is anticipated that in the future we are likely to engage with pupils and families for whom English is not the home language. Rowdeford School will work closely with EMAS to ensure that achievement is secured for these pupils and their families.

Sexual Orientation/Different Families/Gender Identity

These are the fastest changing areas of society, and are being addressed by Rowdeford School. Different families may include:

- families with two mums/dads;
- families with adopted children (including those headed by same-sex couples);
- families with foster children (including those headed by same-sex couples);
- families headed by grandparents/uncles and aunts;
- single-parent families;
- children with more than one home;
- step or blended families.

Celebrating different families is one of the ways Rowdeford School has been recognising the differences and similarities between pupils. Same-sex couples are legally able to adopt children, and this puts additional responsibility on schools to make sure that *all* families providing love and care for children feel welcome as part of the school community. Same-sex couples are being welcomed as foster carers and adopters for Wiltshire Looked-After children and the numbers of families headed by same-sex couples will continue to rise.

Rowdeford School works with pupils to address any use of discriminatory and bullying language that would create an unequal school environment. Rowdeford School confidently tackles homophobic language (and other discriminatory language) and supports pupils to create a school environment that values diversity.

Rowdeford School works with pupils to address any use of discriminatory and bullying language that would create an unequal school environment. Rowdeford School confidently tackles transphobic language (and other discriminatory language) and supports pupils to create a school environment that values diversity.

Rowdeford School will provide comprehensive and appropriate support for pupils who are questioning their sexual orientation/assigned gender and for pupils who identify as lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender.

Rowdeford School has benefited from the information contained within the following resources which have informed and enhanced the work we are undertaking in this area:-

'Valuing All God's Children'

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1988293/valuing%20all%20god's%20children%20web%20final.pdf>

The organisation 'Stonewall' has a wide range of information, advice and resources and Rowdeford School utilises the information to ensure the school creates a positive and inclusive environment for all its pupils.

<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/education-resources>

Rowdeford School is aware of the support that we can access in relation to Gender Identity, including that from the Local Authority, and from *Mermaids* (this charity supports families and schools where gender identity has been recognised as a specific issue).

Rowdeford School is able, with the help of the Local Authority if required, to appropriately support pupils and their parents/carers should the need arise.

<http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

This school has also benefited from the information contained within the following document.

<http://www.allsortsyouth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Trans-Inclusion-Schools-Toolkit.pdf>

In addition, this school is aware of the changes we can make to avoid unnecessary gender distinctions. Such changes introduced by the school not only ensure a more equal environment should there be pupils who are uncertain about their gender identity, but can give all pupils the opportunity to thrive as individuals; able to identify and celebrate their unique strengths and the contributions they will make to community and wider society.

This school has flexibility within the school uniform, does not make any distinction between the sports that girls and boys can play, and endeavours not to divide pupils into groups solely based on their sex.

LGBT+ pupils are a group that may be vulnerable to bullying and unfair treatment. It is important our school creates a supportive environment to enable all our pupils to work out who they are and how they fit into society. As a school, we recognise that historic discrimination and unfairness means this may be more difficult for some pupils.

Equality Objectives: Review of the last 12 months

This section of the report gives an overview of Rowdeford's commitment to equality of opportunity, outlining the work it has undertaken in the previous twelve months as well as the steps it is proposing to take in the year ahead. Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have at least one Equality Objective that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years.

Objective 1: To improve the knowledge and understanding of Rowdeford School in relation to the Equality Act Protected Characteristics and how they can contribute to differing educational outcomes for students (2012-2017). Lead: Rachel Lambert

The school appointed Equality Advocates in 2012 to lead in developing their knowledge and understanding of the protected characteristics and a nominated governor (currently Nick Fletcher) who monitors progress against these objectives. In some cases, (e.g. pregnancy and maternity; EAL), there has been no need for specific work, so awareness of these characteristics has generally been delivered through the curriculum, although this is kept under regular review

Area of Specialism	Advocate
Sex (Gender)	Rachel Lambert
Ethnicity	Hilary Mortimer
SEN and Disability	Nicola Caslin (SENCO)
Faith and Belief	Kate Walling
Sexual Orientation	Charlotte Read
Gender Reassignment	Charlotte Read
EAL	Lesley Sinclair
Pregnancy & Maternity	Hilary Mortimer

Several of the advocates have attended bespoke training in their areas of expertise. These are: ethnicity; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; and EAL.

Progress in last 12 months: Regular monitoring, review and reporting to the Standards and Welfare Committee, has ensured that staff at Rowdeford have developed a very good knowledge and understanding of the various protected characteristics. Colleagues know who they can approach for further information and guidance. Hilary Mortimer took over the role of Ethnicity Advocate in April 2017.

The year ahead: The school lead for Equality (currently the Business Manager) will ensure that Rowdeford fulfils its statutory requirements and will continue to disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate. However, the specific **objective will end in August 2017** because Rowdeford now has established systems and processes in place to ensure knowledge and understanding remains up to date.

Objective 2: To identify areas where additional, future Equalities Objectives could be developed in order to reduce gaps in attainment, foster good relations and/or promote and enhance community cohesion (2012-2018). Lead: Rachel Lambert

Progress in last 12 months: This objective continues to focus on the development of good relations and enhancement of community cohesion. Rowdeford has developed an exciting partnership with the DWP to support employment opportunity with adults who may otherwise find it difficult to find paid work.

We continue to collect, record and monitor equality and diversity information for staff and volunteer recruitment. For the period April '16 – May '17:

16 posts were advertised;
106 applications were received;
101 applicants (95.3%) were either White, British, or White British (the remaining 5 declined to respond);
16 applicants (15%) across all jobs were male;
3 applicants (2.8%) declared a disability.

The year ahead: It is recommended that this objective is **extended for a further year to August 2018** so that Rowdeford continues to identify and support the needs of pupils and the wider community.

Objective 3: To increase awareness of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning) with pupils, to ensure there is enough provision in the Life Skills curriculum to make this happen and that staff are sufficiently trained to facilitate this (2015 – 2018).
Lead: Charlotte Read

Progress in last 12 months we have:

- Continued to work with the steering group to provide staff training and resources for schools;
- Provided bespoke advice and support to both staff and pupils regarding sexuality and relationships, as required;
- Amended the SRE curriculum (see Stonewall comment below)

'By mandating all schools to provide good quality, age-appropriate relationships and sex education the Government has paved the way to change that situation. This should mean that all schools provide the space to discuss LGBT relationships and the issues LGBT people face, enabling more lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people to feel accepted in their school environment.

The year ahead: This work is so important that we have therefore decided to **extend the objective for a further year to August 2018**. We will run further sessions for Year 11, and run the Year 10 session for the current Year 9 cohort, in June 2017. This will be repeated in

2018. There are plans to create a 'Love is...' wall. Charlotte will be working with Rowdeford Buddies, to further develop understanding and tolerance and possibly to introduce a KS4 advocate. Additionally, we will:

- Integrate the resources into the workshop or other curriculum areas as appropriate;
- Continue to work with Wiltshire LGBTQ steering group. Funding cuts make this work more challenging but Rowdeford has an active voice in plans to continue to move forward at a county level

Objective 4: To increase understanding of religious/faith diversity (including people who do not have a faith) and to develop an awareness of the history of religious intolerance in Britain and Europe and to learn about the importance of promoting tolerance and understanding. Lead: Kate Walling

This is an important focus for Rowdeford School which is under-pinned by our values-led curriculum. Our aim is to ensure that our pupils understand and appreciate the rich diversity of Britain and the important values that help people with differing perspectives and outlooks to live together harmoniously.

Progress in last 12 months: With the change to hour long lessons from September 2016, it was agreed to combine the teaching of Beliefs and Values (RE) with PSHE, creating the new subject PSHRE (Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education). This has had the benefit of having more teachers teaching this new subject, and showing how having or not having a religious belief influences the actions of many groups of people. The coordinators of the two "original" subjects worked with a consultant to ensure the best possible marriage of the two subjects and devised a scheme of work that links more closely to our termly values and real life experiences.

The year ahead: A coordinator for PSHRE has been appointed (commencing in September 2017) who will ensure that those teaching the subject have the necessary knowledge and access to resources. Holding regular subject meetings and moderation exercises will ensure consistency and help to monitor pupil progress. Due to changes in teaching staff in the summer of 2017, we have decided to **extend this objective for a further year to August 2018**

Objective 5: To address pupil's mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to preventing mental health difficulties that may start in adolescence, but have a greater impact in adult life. Lead: Beth Ward/ Emma Rossiter

At Rowdeford, it is recognised that academic attainment is very important, but pupils also need to move on from this stage of their education feeling happy and self-confident. Rowdeford School is committed to providing a nurturing environment to help develop the resilience (one of our core values) of pupils to cope with the ups and downs of everyday life. Physical disability is often easy to recognise, but mental disability less so, yet it can be just as debilitating. The purpose of this objective is to develop strategies for coping with mental health issues that may affect our pupils.

Progress in last 12 months: This has been a priority in the School Development Plan for the 16-17 academic year and there has been quite a lot of activity in relation to this:-

- Daily chill 'n' still sessions after lunch are conducted daily in all classes;
- Emma Rossiter conducted a review of these sessions with pupils and staff;
- Emotion Coaching has been introduced by Charlotte Reed-Hammond and 'Stop, Think and Reflect' sheets used post incident to support all students in accessing support to name and accept their emotions;
- There have been a number of teacher and TA training sessions on this, including a TD day session;
- Charlotte has been able to offer this training further afield and the school has been granted the 'Emotion Coaching Organisation mark'.

The year ahead: This objective has run for 2 years, with a specific focus in the school's development plan. Supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing is now embedded at Rowdeford so it is proposed that **this objective will conclude at the end of August 2017.**