



“Live, Laugh, Learn”

**SIMPLY SENSORY
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY INFORMATION &
OBJECTIVES POLICY**

September 2024 - 2027

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Rationale

Pupils are taught that they have rights and we recognise that rights and responsibilities are equally balanced and encourage our children to take responsibility for their actions in order to develop an awareness of how they affect the rights of others.

Children have the right to an education that develops each child's personality and talents to the full and have a right to relax and play and join a wide range of activities. Our children are encouraged to respect their parents, each other, staff and their own and others cultures. Discipline at Simply Sensory respects our children's human dignity. Every child has the right to feel safe and enjoy their education without the threat of bullying behaviour. This applies to everyone, whatever their race, religion, abilities; whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Introduction

This Equality document has been written to meet the requirements of Simply Sensory to carry out the Public Sector Equality Duty in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil, prospective pupil, staff member, parents/carers and the community by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic'. The protected characteristics are:

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

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to pupils. The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (2011), which applies to public bodies. Simply Sensory must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act;
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people and who do not share it.

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

Statement of Equality and Aims

At Simply Sensory we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving our services, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to Simply Sensory feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully.

We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be

respected and celebrated by all those who learn, and teach here.

We believe that everyone is different and we will treat everyone fairly, celebrating differences and meeting different needs so that all members of our community are free to live, learn and achieve their potential. We aim to:

- maintain and promote a working partnership between Simply Sensory parents and community which fosters respect, honesty, truth, cooperation and tolerance.
- help the children understand the world in which they live, have mutual respect for the values of others and work together as a team.
- ensure that everyone, whatever their needs and capabilities, is included and catered for.
- value each individual and recognise and respond to the needs of all children.

Our moral code

Simply Sensory implements a strong set of moral codes that all of our children embrace. Values and skills such as respect, honesty, resilience and independence are emphasised and good behaviour is positively reinforced. Pupils develop good relationships with their teachers. As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, Simply Sensory operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice.

Admissions and exclusions

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

Equal Opportunities for Staff

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;

Defining Equality and Diversity

Equality: is about fairness and equality of opportunity and advancing equality of opportunity involves treating people differently. People should not be treated the same. Relating to the Equality Act (2010) there are nine 'protected characteristics' these are:

Protected Characteristics – and special issues related to some of the characteristics

1. **Race:** the definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Schools have a duty to make sure pupils of all races are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.
2. **Disability:** the Equality act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities’. People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities. The Act defines ‘long term’ as lasting, or likely to last for at least 12 months.
3. **Gender:** We need to ensure that there are no practices which could result in unfair, less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.
4. **Gender Reassignment:** this is defined as anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes. In order to be protected under the Act, a pupil will not necessarily have to be undergoing a medical procedure, but must be taking steps to live in the opposite gender, or proposing to do so. We will ensure that all gender variant pupils, or the children of transgender parents, are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.
5. **Sexual Orientation:** We have a duty to make sure gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. Teaching about marriage must be done in a sensitive, reasonable, respectful and balanced way. We are not under a duty to support, promote or endorse marriage of same sex couples. Teaching should be based on facts and should enable pupils to develop an understanding of how the law applies to different relationships. Teachers must have regard to statutory guidance on sex and relationship education, and to meet duties under equality and human rights law. Where individual teachers are concerned, having a view about something does not amount to discrimination. So, it should not be unlawful for a teacher to express personal views on sexual orientation provided that it is done in an appropriate manner and context (for example responding to questions from pupils). However, it must be remembered that teachers are in a very influential position and their actions and responsibilities are bound by much wider duties.
6. **Religion or Belief:** the Act defines ‘religion’ as being of any religion, and ‘belief’ as any religious or philosophical belief. A lack of religion or lack of belief are also protected characteristics. To benefit from the Act, a religion or belief must have a clear structure and belief system and should contain a certain level of cogency, seriousness and cohesion, and not be incompatible with human dignity. The Act is clear that unlawful religious discrimination can include discrimination against another person of the same religion or belief as the discriminator.
7. **Age** Direct age discrimination is when an employee is treated differently by their employer purely because of their age or being part of a certain age group. This type of discriminative behaviour can happen once or occur repeatedly over a period. [Direct discrimination](#) is known as the most obvious form of discrimination and must be avoided at all times.

8. Marriage/civil partnership: The concept that a person cannot discriminate against another person on the ground that he or she is married or is a civil partner.

9. Pregnancy/maternity:

Under the general duty schools must exercise 'due regard' in respect of each of the nine protected characteristics (excluding marriage and civil partnership) to: - eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

Diversity: is about valuing people as individuals and learning from our differences. Our differences can be visible and or non-visible. Promoting diversity, we can meet different needs creatively to ensure opportunities are available to all and potential is fulfilled. Promoting a diversity friendly school culture, we are able to meet our aims and objectives more efficiently. Culture is about the way we behave towards one another. It is about how we treat one another and respect our differences. Promoting diversity and a diversity friendly culture helps to create a more productive community.

Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of this policy.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of Simply Sensory management.

Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within our environment. All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances. Staff should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person'

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than when otherwise would have been because of something they have done ('a prohibited act') in connection with the Act. e.g., making an allegation of discrimination.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;

- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g., food, music, religion, dress etc.;
- Refusal to cooperate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

All incidents should be reported straight away to Simply Sensory management. It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents.

Publishing the scheme

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to prepare and publish objectives, we will:

- a. Publish our information and objectives on our website;
- b. Raise awareness of the plan through staff meetings and other communications;
- c. Make sure hard copies are available.

Ensuring Equality of Opportunity and Participation

Objectives – Simply Sensory will ensure that:

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed.
- All staff are aware of our Equality information and objectives.
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution.
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers.

Promoting Positive Attitudes and Meeting Needs. Simply Sensory will:

- Promote positive images which reflect diversity in terms of race, gender, and disability, for example in books, publications and learning materials.
- Where possible seek to recruit disabled people and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute.
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups.
- Helping children and young people to understand others and value diversity.
- Promoting shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them.