

Shillington and Stondon Federation - Equalities Statement

Date: 27 November 2025

Review Date: Annually

“Value everyone, Value every chance, Value every day”

The Shillington and Stondon Federation is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life. We are outward facing schools drawing from the valuable knowledge, experience and life skills from our stakeholders, local community and from our environment. The principle of equal opportunities for all is rooted in our strong school values.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At the Shillington and Stondon Federation we believe diversity is a strength and should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us. We are welcoming without exception, we take pride in similarities and differences, whatever they are. Equal opportunities and mutual respect permeate every aspect of our school life.

Equality of Teaching and Learning

We empower our children to be curious, adventurous, innovative, independent learners who are ambitious for themselves and each other. We want them to maximise every opportunity, overcome challenges and fulfil their potential as responsible citizens. We do this by:

- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and preparing them for life in a diverse society
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school and local community without stereotyping
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child’s education
- Utilising teaching approaches appropriate for the whole school population which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Equality in Admissions and Exclusions

Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, belief, disability, or socio-economic background.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are keen to ensure that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community. The federation has a full and separate Equality Policy which includes our Equality Objectives. Please consult this for further details.

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. We ensure that learners have access to reasonable adjustments so that they can achieve their potential. This can be achieved through differentiated resources or additional support and are adopted as an everyday part of school life. Specific examples include appropriate placing of pupils with vision or hearing challenges in the classroom; provision of calm corners, low stimulus classrooms and fidget toys; use of weighted chairs, wobble cushions, desk slopes and movement breaks to facilitate learning for individual pupils. Different coloured book pages are available to assist with eye conditions and dyslexia etc, and background colour on computers changed as required. Sensory circuits (PE) are available at both schools to assist some pupils adopt the right frame of mind for the school day.

Regular pupil progress meetings are held with the Head of School to track every pupil's progress against targets, with additional check-ins for SEND and Pupil Premium children. Each school's approach and results are monitored and discussed regularly by the Governing Board, including specific performance data on pupils with different characteristics.

Principle 2. We recognise and respect difference: Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Shillington and Stondon Lower have a positive values ethos. Values underpin everything we do at our schools, and they create a solid foundation for our children to live in society. We have a set of core values, co-constructed by parents, governors, staff and children which comprise of respect, kindness, honesty, friendship, perseverance and self-belief. These values form the basis of weekly assemblies and children are recognised for showing them. The schools also recognise and teach the British Values and the protected characteristics. A weekly assembly led by a member of staff is focused on values.

We have recently moved from our use of the Literacy Tree Scheme to the Essential Writing scheme, used in the teaching of English, but continue to make a deliberate and active choice to promote diverse texts from other cultures, geographies, and faiths. Our English Subject Leader continues to monitor this, for all year groups, on an on-going basis.

More racially diverse historical role models have formed a curriculum thread in History for the last two academic years, including black people in Britain through the Roman Empire (Year 4) and Egyptians (Year 3).

Principle 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We strive to develop an understanding that although we are all unique and individual, we all have some commonality. Children are reminded of behavioural expectations of our values, with parents asked to reinforce behaviours at home. Our values underpin our ethos, vision, policies and practice. Adults consistently model excellent values towards each other and towards the children, and relationships between the children, and between children and staff, demonstrate complete tolerance.

Both schools have introduced the Zones of Regulation approach which is a common format to help children identify how they are feeling, promote the understanding of different feelings, and to develop children's resilience. All staff have also undertaken training re the Therapeutic Thinking initiative being promoted by CBC to help support all children to manage their behaviours, including those with difficult or unsafe behavioural tendencies.

Any bullying or racist incidents, and how they are managed, are regularly reviewed by the Governing Board.

Principle 4. We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We follow Safer Recruitment practice which conforms to HR standards and guidelines, in compliance with Central Bedfordshire's approach. We have a robust and effective appraisal process. All leavers are offered the opportunity of an Exit interview with school governors.

Principle 5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist. We work with a wide range of outside agencies, often via "Early Help" or the CBC's "Local Offer", to ensure that our families are able to access equality of provision. Pupil Premium and SEND money are directed, where appropriate for individual pupils, to access involvement in specialist projects or counselling.

All staff have access to "Care First", an employee support service run by Beds Borough, have previously undergone mental health awareness training, and have access to weekly webinars.

Principle 6. We consult and involve widely. We have close relationships with all parents, the village churches (including assemblies led by a lay reader or parish vicar, when available), other local schools, particularly within the Shefford and Stotfold cluster, and our neighbours. The most recent Ofsted parental surveys (Stondon-Nov 2022, Shillington-July 2023) were positive, and a further Parents/Carers survey was completed in July 2025. We work with local clubs and providers, enabling sharing of facilities and promote their cause within our schools' communities. Pupils are encouraged to participate in local community activities.

Principle 7. Society as a whole should benefit. As an outward facing federation, we encourage a wide range of charitable activities and causes including Chums (Bedfordshire mental health) and the Need project (local foodbanks). We support national and international charities (eg Poppy Appeal, Macmillan coffee morning), hold special assemblies (as appropriate) encouraging our pupils to develop an understanding of others' needs and challenges, and offering opportunities for members of our federation community to "give" to others.

This is an annual statement made on behalf of the Governing Board by the Headteacher.

Sarah Woodham
Headteacher
November 2025