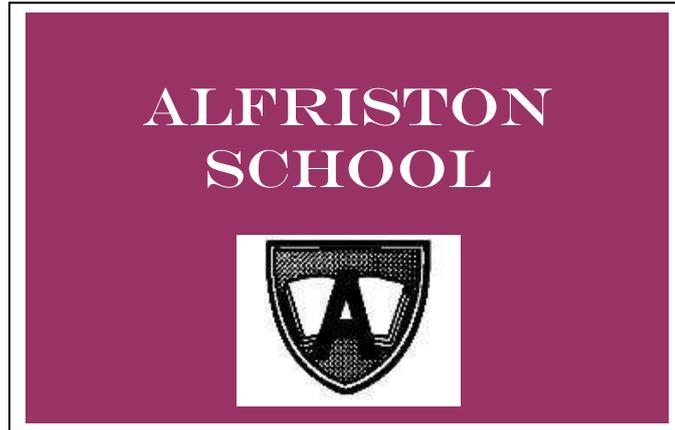


Equality Objectives



Date reviewed: October 2015

Legal Requirements

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people on the grounds of protected characteristics - disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and age.

The Equality Act 2010 also requires public bodies such as schools to have due regard
+++++66 to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people from different equality groups

This is called the public sector Equality Duty and its purpose is to promote equality for all.

The Government has issued guidance which sets out that having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the public sector Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that considering equality issues must influence the decisions reached by schools– such as in how we act as employers; how we develop, evaluate and review our policies; how we design, deliver and evaluate what we offer and how we commission and procure services from others.

Schools also have a responsibility to:

- Publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012 and every four years thereafter;
- Publish information annually from 6 April 2012 to demonstrate their compliance with the general Equality Duty
- Publish information relating to their employees and others affected by their policies and practices
- Public bodies with fewer than 150 employees are not required to publish information on the effect of their policies and practices on their workforce.

A school's published information should include:

- Information on the effect that their policies and practices have had on employees, service users and others from the protected groups;
- Evidence of the analysis undertaken to establish whether their policies and practices will (or have) furthered the three equality aims in the general equality duty;
- Details of the information used in that analysis, and
- Details of engagement with people with an interest in the aims of the duty.

This information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public

Introduction

Deciding on and meeting our Equality Objectives will require ownership by Governors, senior leaders, all staff, the school community and learners.

This document is to help us focus on the outcomes that matter to the people who use our school and its services and our local community; and to ensure that our services are accessible and delivered effectively.

We need to be able to demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. Our success in meeting our objectives will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, school improvement processes and our self evaluation processes.

Our Vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity

We will treat everyone at Alfriston fairly so that all members of our school community can be free to live, learn and enjoy.

At Alfriston we have a commitment to:

- Tackling discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief and age
- Positively advancing equality.
- Creating good relationships in the school between all groups by race, gender/gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief and age.
- Promoting equality of opportunity for all.

We will ensure that every pupil irrespective of race, disability, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that every pupil has access to the necessary teaching and support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We will ensure that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that the adults working or volunteering in the school are from diverse groups. We believe that this provides good role models for our pupils.

We will involve pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors and communities in the development of our objectives. They will be involved from the very start and their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of our objectives. The aim is to ensure that we meet the needs of people: from all ethnic backgrounds and of all religions or beliefs; of all ages; of all genders and sexual orientations and of all abilities.

The philosophy of our school talks of valuing the individuality of all our pupils. We are committed to giving all our pupils every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. Within this ethos of achievement, we do not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. We actively tackle discrimination against those with a disability (disabilism), racial discrimination including discrimination based on religion or belief/non-belief, sexual (orientation) harassment and discrimination, gender re-assignment, pregnancy or maternity, breastfeeding discrimination and promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst all. We aim to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, religion, belief/non-belief or background. We are committed to ensuring that positive action is taken where necessary to redress the balance of inequality that may exist. Based on this our schools admissions policy is equally open to pupils of all groups. Within the context of the school we aim to positively transform individual and shared circumstances, perceptions, attitudes and relations. We aim to reflect the diversity of our local community and society and ensure that the education we offer reduces the chances of social divisions and parallel lives by recognising, celebrating and valuing different backgrounds, lifestyles and identities. We uphold fundamental British values and will endeavour to ensure that all children learn these as part of a broad and diverse curriculum. Through our work on preventing radicalisation and extremism (both violent and non-violent) we will engage with our school community to enhance community cohesion. Our Safeguarding Policy reflects our commitment to ensuring our school is a safe place for all. We believe that these commitments are as important in the context of a school with limited ethnic diversity as well as in a school with a diverse population whatever that diversity may be.

Our school context

Alfriston is a special school for girls with moderate learning difficulties aged between 11 and 18. The school has boarding provision for up to 20 pupils. Most pupils are admitted to the school at the start of year 7 and come from both special and mainstream schools. Others are referred throughout the year and across the age groups. Pupils are all statemented as having moderate learning difficulties and other associated disabilities.

Alfriston serves the whole community of Buckinghamshire and also takes a limited number of pupils from other authorities. Our pupils come from very mixed backgrounds, within a wide socio-economic range including those from high prosperity families and those with significant deprivation.

17% of pupils are on free school meals.

Our pupils come from a variety of ethnic groups, mainly white British (80%) and a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds:

- 10 % Pakistani and Indian
- 2 % White and black Caribbean
- 1 % Black Caribbean
- 1 % White and Black African
- 1 % Gypsy / Roma
- 1% Any other Asian Background
- 1 % Any other White Background
- 1 % Any other mixed Background
- 1 % Black African
- 1 % Chinese

The school is sensitive to the varying religious background of pupils, parents, staff and users.

The community in which the school is situated is predominately white British.

Roles and responsibilities, commitment and accountability

We will mainstream equality issues by:

- Paying **due regard** to equality issues within all our key policies, planning, decision making processes and performance management;
- Ensuring that our planning contributes towards our equality objectives;
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to monitor and report on our progress against our objectives; and
- Ensuring that we engage effectively with our learners, staff, parents and local communities in planning, delivering and monitoring the objectives.

Race

We recognise that Black and ethnic minority people experience discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality and ethnic origin. This discrimination manifests itself in all areas of life. Racial harassment and violence is one of the most serious consequences of racism, damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities.

We will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist our learners to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our school.

We are committed to working for the equality of all ethnic groups. The Governing Body understands its accountability. Under the duties of the Equality Act we will:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Keeping accurate records of all ethnic groups, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them;
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily according to local authority guidance *Challenging and Dealing with Racist Incidents in Schools* and notify complainants of the outcomes and action taken; and
- Encouraging dialogue between different racial groups

Advance equality by:

- Expanding access and achievement across all communities and in all areas of school activity;
- Promoting the active participation of minority communities in shaping the future of our school;
- Consulting with ethnic minority learners, their families and staff on issues affecting them rather than with people acting on their behalf.
- Ensuring the school staff, learners and their families as well as the wider community fully understand the principles of race equality and good race relations.

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting activities that celebrate our common experience as well as those that recognise diversity
- Encouraging learners and their families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life;
- Fostering understanding and respect for the cultures and faiths of all our learners and their families; Countering myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations ;

At Alfriston we are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those from ethnic minority groups, do not under achieve. Our intention is to monitor progress for different groups of pupils.

We provide a curriculum and teaching methods that are appropriate and acceptable to all ethnic groups. Cultural issues have an impact on the curriculum and how it is taught. We aim to monitor the degree to which pupils from ethnic minority groups are involved in all areas of the curriculum.

We consider it to be of paramount importance that all pupils are treated fairly and that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. We are aware that poor behaviour can be indicative of disaffection and marginalisation. Monitoring data stemming from the school's behaviour policy and the way in which this applies to different pupil groups could highlight a race equality issue.

The school works hard to ensure that attendance is high and unauthorised absences are investigated. Our intention is to monitor for different pupil groups. We actively seek to employ staff who reflect the multicultural nature of our school population.

We promote an active partnership with all parents and carers and we give opportunities for participation in all aspects of school life. Our intention is to monitor the involvement of parents and carers so that if particular groups are under-represented, efforts can be made to redress any imbalance.

We will publish our progress annually as part of our review of the School's Equality Objectives.

Disability

We recognise that people with disabilities experience discrimination across all areas of life. We welcome the requirements of the Equality Act and set out our commitment to meeting the duties in relation to disability. Our aim is to advance disability equality across all areas of the school, to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users.

We are committed to working for the equality of people with and without disabilities. The Governing Body understands its accountability. Under the duties of the Equality Act we will:

Tackle unlawful discrimination against people with disabilities by:

- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes;
- Making the environment as safe as possible and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of, disabled learners, staff and families.
- Monitoring and eliminating discrimination and disability related harassment
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled learners can take advantage of education and associated services

Advance equality for people with disabilities by:

- Removing barriers to accessibility, particularly in relation to education, employment and access to services, information and buildings;
- Increasing the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the school curriculum
- Providing where possible, support, assistance and care to disabled learners to enable them to lead independent lives;
- Supporting disabled learners, staff and carers according to their individual need
- Taking steps to meet people's needs related to their disability, even if this requires more favourable treatment
- Involving disabled learners, their families and disabled staff in the changes and improvements we make and consulting them on issues affecting them, rather than with people acting on their behalf.
- Monitoring staff and learners by disability.
- Having a Disability Equality Objective

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between people with disabilities and other people.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities
- Increasing the inclusion of positive images of people with disabilities across the curriculum
- Encouraging participation of people with disabilities in school life.

As a special school, all the priorities in our school development plan are relevant to increasing participation in the curriculum, and to creating opportunities for participation in activities and events outside the formal taught curriculum.

The school has set the following overall priorities for increasing curriculum access:

1) Improve the quality of teaching and learning

- i. Increase provision and skills in speech, language and communication
- ii. Develop the use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- iii. To develop music provision across the school

2) Ensure and develop pupils' well-being

- i. Increase opportunities for an extended day and for independence and responsibilities
- ii. Promote effective communication and working with parents
- iii. To improve links with and transition to a wide variety of educational provision beyond Alfriston

3) Develop the management and support structure for staff and pupils to facilitate learning

- i. Extend the use of ICT across the school
- ii. Ensure the sustained quality of BTEC provision
- iv. Establish a process for sustainable excellence through effective governance
- v. Make more effective use of site and premises to meet current and future needs of the school

We will publish our progress annually as part of our review of the School's Equality Objectives.

Gender

We are committed to combating sex discrimination and sexism and promoting the equality of women and men. We recognise that society has stereotypes for both women and men, and both women and men can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes. We are aware that staff with caring and domestic responsibilities may need to work part-time or flexible working hours.

We will work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexual harassment, domestic violence and other hate crimes.

We are committed to working for the equality of women and men. The Governing Body understands its accountability under the Equality Act and we will give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation
- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes;

- Making the environment as safe as possible and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of girls, boys, women and men

Advance equality for girls, boys, women and men, in all our functions by:

- Monitoring learner outcomes and achievement by gender
- Monitoring staffing and pay by gender
- Having a Gender Equality Objective

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women
- Increasing the inclusion of positive, non stereotypical images of women and men, girls and boys across the curriculum
- Encouraging the equal participation of boys and girls, women and men in all aspects of school life.

As a single-sex school, we do not consider there to be a need for an objective to close any gender gaps for pupil achievement.

We will publish our progress annually as part of our review of the School's Equality Objectives.

Religion and Belief

We recognise that the Equality Act 2010 requires us to assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures have on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief and non-belief. We will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle discrimination and assist our learners to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our school.

We are committed to working for the equality for people based on their religion, belief and non belief. The Governing Body understands its accountability under the Equality Act and we will give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Monitoring and eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of religion or belief
- Making the environment as safe as possible and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour on the grounds of religion, belief or non-belief

Advance equality in all our functions by:

- Removing any barriers which prevent children and adults of all religions, beliefs or non belief taking a full part in our school life
- Assessing the impacts of our policies and procedures on promoting equality based on religion, belief and non belief

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Encouraging the equal participation of people of all religions, beliefs and non belief in all aspects of school life

All pupils at Alfriston have a statement of educational need. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to identify their religion/belief on this official document, or choose not to declare a religion at all.

The six main world religions are covered across the RE curriculum. All pupils have equal opportunities to learn about and to learn from religion, according to the Bucks Agreed Syllabus for RE. Pupils' individual beliefs are considered and they are invited to share their faith experiences, rituals and/or festivals within lessons if they wish to do so.

Assemblies and collective acts of worship include all pupils whatever their religion or belief. Prayers and quiet times – when necessary – are addressed to “God” rather than a being connected with one or more religion. Pupils and staff respect the beliefs of each other and often share experiences, ideas and opinions in informal and unstructured ways.

We will publish our progress annually as part of our review of the School's Equality Objectives.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

We are committed to combating discrimination faced by lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBT people across services and employment.

We recognise that the Equality Act 2010 requires us to assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures have on advancing equality for people based on their sexual orientation. We will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle discrimination and assist our learners to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our school.

We respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation. We tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and aim to improve knowledge about LGBT communities, both internally and within the community as a whole. The Governing Body understands its accountability under the Equality Act and we will give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school
- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and homophobic language;
- Making the environment as safe as possible and challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Advance equality for of LGBT people in all our functions by:

- Assessing the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women
- Increasing the inclusion of positive, non stereotypical images of LGBT people and the contributions they have made to different aspects of the curriculum

Alfriston operates a PSHE curriculum which supports pupils to address relationships in all forms. The incident reporting system incorporates all bullying incidents, to include homophobic bullying and all incidents of this nature are taken seriously. Analysis of behaviour data enables us to identify if homophobic bullying is evident or on the rise and react accordingly. The school ensures

that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other students.

We will publish our progress annually as part of our review of the School's Equality Objective

Age

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We recognise that society has negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people. These attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large.

Age equality means securing the equal participation in society of people of every age, securing a balance between equal citizenship, equality of opportunity, equality of outcome and respect for difference

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and language;
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Advance equality by:

- Assessing the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting age equality

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Increasing the inclusion of positive, non stereotypical images of people of all ages and the contributions they have made to different aspects of the curriculum

In Alfriston we ensure that positive images are presented of people of all ages.

Anti-bullying

Our School states clearly that all forms of bullying and discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We recognise that a strong and well observed anti bullying policy will have a positive impact on the lives of children from all equality groups. We have therefore set out the measures that our school will take to address bullying and discriminatory incidents in our Anti-Bullying Policy. We monitor and submit data regarding bullying and discriminatory incidents to the Local Authority as required

All bullying is taken very seriously in Alfriston. All staff have training as part of the behavioural policy and practice. All serious incidents are recording in line with good practice identified in the anti-bullying strategy. Information gained through analysing any bullying incidents is used to prevent further incidents. Pupils access anti-bullying information, advice and guidance through PSHE lessons and the pastoral system across the school. Alfriston presents a "no blame" approach – all staff and pupils are made aware of this policy on entry to the school. A pupil booklet is used to ensure everyone understands our policy.

Employment Practices

In our School we ensure that we observe the principles of equal opportunities in how we employ, develop and treat our staff .

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and Bucks County Council guidelines. We will take steps to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored. Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices. All staff and visitors must support the ethos of the school, promoting equality and challenging bias and stereotyping wherever they observe it. We will ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated in the induction programme for new staff. The skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge. Staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy. Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and the school strives to reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

Due Regard

Under the legislation we are required to pay **due regard** to equalities when planning and implementing policies, functions or procedures. We need to understand whether our policies and services are meeting everyone's needs and that anyone who needs to can get access to them.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governors Personnel Committee in ensuring it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. The governing body will receive annual reports for review that will include reference to the school population, key initiatives and progress against targets and future plans.

This policy will be read and reviewed in conjunction with all our school policies, and in particular:

- School Improvement Plan
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Curriculum
- Uniform
- Behaviour
- Careers/work experience
- School trips

Consultation

The Equality Policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team annually. As part of this process, the school is committed to listening to the views of pupils, parents, staff, governors and members of the wider community. It will achieve this by consulting with these groups in the following ways:

- Including specific questions relating to equality on an annual parental questionnaire. Inviting comment and input by interested parents via the school newsletter;
- Discussing disability and gender issues at a staff meeting and a meeting of the Governing Body;
- Inviting comment and input by interested members of our wider community;
- Asking the school council to discuss and put forward their ideas on disability and gender equality.

Equality Objectives Summary

This section summarises the objectives we have identified in order to eliminate discrimination and harassment and advance equality in relation to gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Objectives:

- To make the school a place where everyone, taking account of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued
- To ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- To consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine future equality objectives

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing body accepts their responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment, as outlined in the objectives.

All who work in the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion and avoiding unfair discrimination. Overall responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Senior Leadership Team and a named governor. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating work on equality issues, including consultation with stakeholders
- Dealing with reports of harassment;
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, especially those considered to be vulnerable;
- Monitoring exclusions.

Specific responsibilities for other members of the school community are outlined below.

Our governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with all current equality legislation;
- That this policy and its procedures are followed.

The head teacher is responsible for:

- Implementing the school's Equality Policy
- Ensuring that the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents/carers know about it
- Ensuring that this policy and its procedures are followed;
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, as necessary;
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All our staff are responsible for:

- Treating all members of our school community with respect;
- Constantly recognising the contributions made by every student within the school;
- Dealing with racist incidents, recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping;
- Making sure that all incidents of a discriminatory nature are immediately challenged and recorded through the appropriate channels;
- Log all racist incidents in accordance with statutory guidance;
- Promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender or disability;

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are aware of the background of all children they teach and that students are treated equally and with respect. We do not under any circumstance negatively discriminate against any child.
- When planning activities, teaching staff pay due regard to the racial and cultural sensitivities of the class. Teachers strive to incorporate diversity in a positive way which challenges stereotypes and assumptions.

The role of parents/carers;

- Parents/carers are expected to support the School's Equality Policy
- Where a child has intentionally behaved in an unfair, unjust or discriminatory manner it is the expectation that the parents/carers will support the sanction applied
- The school works collaboratively with parents/carers so a strong and consistent message is delivered about appropriate behaviour

The role of the students;

- Students are to abide by this policy, in school and when travelling to and from school
- When witnessing an incident of discrimination, a student must report it
- A child who is a victim must report it so that the School can deal with the matter swiftly and efficiently.

Reporting and reviewing the objectives

In line with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty we will produce a report on our progress every year and review and revise the Schools Equality Objectives every four years.

Publication

The School's Equality Objectives are published and are available to all on our website

Complaints

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the school because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class, they should report this without fail through the School's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under our Grievance at Work Policies, as appropriate. We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour. Complaints about staff will be investigated using the appropriate procedures.

Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report on complaints annually and on action taken.

Acknowledgements - This Equality Objective planning proforma has been developed from the Schools' Single Equality Scheme produced by Cornwall Local Authority. We gratefully acknowledge their work and the work of many other individuals and organisations in this field.
