Urchfont C of E Primary School

Equality Information 2021

Equality Information Report
September 2021
CT

Introduction

Urchfont CE Primary School is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with respect as we want our school to be a safe and inspiring learning environment for all our pupils. This school recognises that people have different needs and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating everyone the same. Urchfont School creates inclusive processes and practices where the varying needs of individuals can be identified and met.

This document explains how we show our commitment to equality[i] for our school population and how we plan to tackle inequalities that may impact at school.

Celebrating our Successes

We have identified two Equality Objectives are our priorities until 2023. These are: -

- to narrow the gap in attainment, progress and differences in attitude between boys and girls through the school.
- to continue with the Equality Objectives that addresses pupil mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to promote positive mental health within our children reflecting that we all have mental health but sometimes it is not as good as it could be and this could be transferred into adult life.

We are working hard to reduce the academic gap between boys and girls., However, more girls are working at an age expected level in reading and maths. However, more boys are working at an age expected level on maths than girls.

The school has continued to place the well-being of children at the heart of all of its work. As a result, in a pupils' survey (June 2021), 91% of pupils felt that all children were treated equally and 92% of children were happy in school.

Priorities for the Year 2021/22

Sex (Gender) – Boys and Girls

The underachievement of boys compared with girls persists both nationally and in Wiltshire. In Wiltshire, the attainment gap is marginally under 8 percentage points, with 68% of girls achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics compared to 60% of boys. In Wiltshire, the sex (girls/boys) attainment gap for the broad 'major' ethnic category All Black Pupils is larger at 10 percentage points with 62.7% of girls and 52.6% of boys achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths

Two thirds of the gender gap in achieving the expected standard in Reading at age eleven is attributable to the fact that boys have lower levels of language and attention at age five.

This school knows that intervention targeting early language and attention have potential for improving outcomes for all children. Boys benefit from such interventions because they are more likely to have these problems to begin with.

This school has well established practice to raise the attainment of boys - particularly in writing including boy orientated topics, Drama into Writing techniques, booster groups etc. This school is participating in the Wiltshire LA Oracy project as well as the National Neli project. Through these projects we hope that all children, but especially boys are able to articulate their thinking with more clarity.

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As a result of this initiatives, we have seen an improvement in the attainment of the boys in writing.

In July 2019, the overall number of boys at the end of Key Stage 2 achieving expected attainment in reading writing and maths was 69% compared to 83% in July 2018. This is an decrease of 14%. This is compared to 100% of girls who achieved the expected progress in July 2019 compared to 66% in July 2018.

At Key Stage 1 in July 2019, the number of boys achieving expected standard was 67% compared to 83% of girls. In comparison, the number of boys achieving expected standard in July 2018 was 42% compared to the girls 63%.

We will continue to ensure that we reduce the gender gap in attainment at Key stage 1 and 2.

Minority Ethnic Pupils

Many minority ethnic groups of pupils do well but there are also groups where underachievement persists. Underachievement for the groups highlighted in this report are a national as well as a Wiltshire concern and have been an ongoing issue since ethnic monitoring was introduced.

Very small numbers of minority ethnic pupils in Urchfont School mean that individual pupil-targeted approaches must be used to identify both underachievement, and to celebrate successes. LA and national attainment data provides a valuable source of information to identify potential areas of concern.

a) All Black Pupils Major Ethnic Monitoring Category

LA data has highlighted concerns about the attainment of the All Black Pupils major ethnic monitoring category and for the Black Caribbean minor ethnic monitoring category.

Wiltshire Key Stage 2 data for 2019 shows attainment was lower for pupils in the All Black Pupil major ethnic monitoring category compared with the White British pupils minor ethnic monitoring category. Fewer boys (8 percentage points lower) in the All Black Pupil category achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths compared with boys in the White British ethnic category. Attainment for Black Caribbean pupils was 14 percentage points lower than the attainment of White British pupils.

A lower proportion of Wiltshire pupils in the All Black Pupil major ethnic monitoring category achieved a Higher Standard in the Reading, Writing and Maths assessments compared with White British pupils. Pupils in the All Black Pupil were 3.7 less likely to have achieved the Higher Standard compared to White British Pupils.

When and as appropriate Urchfont School works closely with the LA to implement proven strategies to raise attainment during the primary school years.

Our curriculum, teaching, policies and practices are regularly reviewed and updated. The Black Lives Matter movement has provided a new impetus to this important work. This school is also receiving regular guidance and information from the LA as well as sharing best practice with other Wiltshire schools.

Equality Objective: Black Lives Matter

This school will develop a separate action plan to tackle long standing inequalities highlighted by the recent Black Lives Matter movement.

b) Gypsy/Roma/Traveller Pupils

Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller pupils are the lowest achieving ethnic groups.

In Wiltshire, just under 18% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved the expected standard. Small numbers mean the attainment of Wiltshire Traveller pupils is not being published. While the overwhelming majority of Wiltshire Gypsy/Roma/Traveller pupils choose to attend primary school until the end of Year 6, it remains a concern that a majority of Wiltshire Gypsy and Traveller families choose to home educate their children during the secondary school years.

A House of Commons Briefing Paper (September 2017) reported that education issues for Gypsies and Travellers include prejudice, discrimination and discriminatory attitudes. The issues also include the schools' responses to discrimination, and high levels of self-exclusion from mainstream education because of discrimination.

National research published in 2018 suggests there has been a significant increase in the number of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller children who are being cared for by local councils. The data shows an increase of 900% for the numbers of Gypsy/Roma children and 400% for Irish Traveller children since 2009. One of the reasons suggested is that Gypsy/Roma and Traveller families are less likely to be offered or to access early help and support and this is important as it is an area in which schools are able to help.

c) English as an Additional Language

In Wiltshire schools, the same proportion, 64%, of pupils for whom English is known to be their first language and those for whom it is an additional language achieved the expected standard.

It should be noted that children with EAL have widely varying levels of English proficiency. Some children have no English and some are fluent multilingual English-speakers and may have lived in English-speaking countries or have been educated in English throughout their childhood. Attainment is also affected by first language; for example, there are significant differences between Tamil and Chinese speakers, who, on average, perform better than Pashto and Turkish speakers.

In addition, prior education and arrival time in English medium education impacts on attainment. The Wiltshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service advise on best practice for individual pupils to ensure those most vulnerable to poor attainment are to fulfil their academic potential.

Our School – What we are doing?

Mrs Carol Talbot is the member of staff who provides advice and support on this area of equalities. We will use all opportunities to support and develop our pupils. This will be fulfilled through:-

Assemblies

a) SEAL themes to encourage equality,

b) Key Visitors to demonstrate opportunity

c) Sharing and celebration assemblies

Curriculum

a) Linking with a school in Sudan & fundraising to increase opportunities for those children in linked school,

b) RE curriculum,

c) PSHE

d) Reflection Area in the school hall and in each classroom when appropriate.

Events

a) Continued fundraising for school in Sudan

b) Sponsorship of two children to attend school in Juba, South Sudan

Mrs Talbot will continue to work closely with the families of minority ethnic pupils who (national and LA data indicates) may be vulnerable to underachievement. The aim of this engagement is to develop partnership strategies to help these pupils to achieve their full academic potential. However, we currently have no children who are deemed EAL.

d) Religion and Belief

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

Urchfont School is committed to supporting all our young people as they develop a personal relationship with their own 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 related to religion and belief. Comments from young people about bullying include the following, "Encourage and celebrate difference – don't single us out if we are different, have difficulties, or have different beliefs and views" (Wiltshire Anti-Bullying Charter. https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/core-themes/emotional-health-and-wellbeing/anti-bullying-practice/). This school is vigilant in maintaining an awareness of, and appropriate responses to, this possibility. Urchfont 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.

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Urchfont School ensures that 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 Britain. As part of a whole school activity, pupils celebrate different religious festivals and learn from religious representatives from various communities.

Urchfont School recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern. This school is aware that Islamophobia and anti-Semitism (discrimination or prejudice against people because they are Muslim or Jewish) is increasing and that it displays many of the same traits as racism. This school will continue its work to inform and actively promote acceptance and respect. Nationally, between 2015/6 and 2016/7 there was an increase of 37% in the numbers of faith or belief-based incidents reported to the Police either on school property or near to school property.

11% of Islamophobic incidents happen in educational institutions, including name-calling, jibes about so-called Islamic State, violence, and victimisation when wearing a hijab. Many Muslim young people say abuse is so commonplace it is normalised. Childline has recorded a spike in race- and faith-based bullying with victims reporting that they feel isolated, withdrawn and lack self-esteem.

This school is benefiting from an education resource designed for work with primary school children to educate them about Islamophobia. The development of this resource was funded by the Home Office.

Urchfont CE Primary 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 Britain. As part of a whole school activity, pupils celebrate different religious festivals and learn from religious representatives from various communities.

e)Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation (LGBT)

Gender Identity remains a relatively new area for schools but this Protected Characteristic identifies a small section of society as vulnerable to discrimination and inequality. Gender Identity was included in equality legislation for the first time in 2010, and many schools, parents, as well as wider society, are learning about the issues for the first time.

Schools in Wiltshire access expert advice and support from the LA, as well as exchanging best practice with other schools. Urchfont School recognises that Gender Identity is a complex area and that children, young people and their families are navigating an equality area where best practice is not fixed, and where the central advice is to be 'led by the child'.

This school is committed to ensuring that all our children feel safe while at school and that each child is given the chance to develop their unique identity with support from teaching and support staff, and their peers.

Pupils are taught that families come in many different forms and include single-parent; grandparent-led; same-sex parents; step-families; foster families; families who have adopted children; etc.

Our pupils understand that although families can be very different, what matters is that everyone in a family loves and cares for each other.

This school recognises that negative views within wider society about LGBT+ people can have a detrimental effect on pupil wellbeing. Data from Childline and anecdotal information from CAMHS (serving Wiltshire children) show that increasing numbers of children in primary schools are raising issues relating to gender identity and sexual orientation. Gender Identity and sexual orientation are not mental health concerns but many of the referrals received by CAMHS for young people with issues related to their gender identity or sexual orientation are linked to bullying, isolation and internalised negative views about LGBT+ people, that in turn impacts on their emotional and mental health. This school recognises that pupils with these issues will need support from school-based counsellors/school support groups and national websites such as Young Minds. CAMHS is encouraging of primary schools who can provide such support to their pupils, as dealing effectively with these issues at a younger age appears to reduce the more serious mental health issues presented by some LGBT+ secondary school pupils.

There are many charitable organisations providing support on gender identity to young people, their families and to their schools. There are also organisations able to provide advice and support where a pupil has a parent who is transgender. The LA has up to date information about the different organisations, the services they provide and how to contact them and is available to advise.

This school has benefited from the work undertaken by the Church of England and published in the document "*Valuing All God's Children"*. This excellent document provides a framework that helps our school to address all issues of bullying behaviour and discriminatory language, and includes homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

f) Disability (Special Educational Needs and Disability)

SEND pupils are categorised as 'SEN with a statement or Education, health and care (EHC) plan' and 'SEN support'. In Wiltshire in 2019, 16% of pupils at the end of key stage 2 have a special educational need and 4% have a statement or education, health and care plan.

Of all reported characteristics, pupils with SEND have the largest attainment gap when compared to those without any identified SEND. In 2019, 25.6% of Wiltshire pupils with SEN support reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, compared with 75% of Wiltshire pupils with no identified SEND, resulting in an attainment gap of 49 percentage points.

Urchfont School is required to publish information on the attainment of SEND pupils. The focus of this section of this Equality Information document is disability. The disability areas being highlighted in this report have been adapted to reflect our current pupil profile.

Urchfont CE Primary School has decided that we will continue to work on the Equality Objectives that will 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.

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Urchfont CE Primary School tracks the progress of all groups of pupils. However, the number of pupils contained in this group within the school is very small which makes data statically inaccurate and allows pupils to be identified within our community and therefore will not be published.

However, we currently have 16 pupils on the school's Special Education Needs register. The reason for this can be very varied and includes cognition and learning difficulties, Speech and Language issues and Communication and Interaction difficulties.

SEND Pupils and the link with Poverty
This school is aware that there is a strong link between poverty and disabilities that negatively impact on educational attainment. Children from low-income families are more likely than their peers to be born with inherited special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), are more likely to develop some forms of SEND in childhood, and are less likely to move out of SEND while at school. Also, children with SEND are more likely than their peers to be born into poverty, and, in addition, more likely to experience poverty as they grow up.

Urchfont School, as part of its support for disadvantaged pupils, has made the achievement of pupils with SEND a whole school priority and is supported with expert advice from our SEND education specialists.   Urchfont School also knows that a strong partnership with parents/carers is important, and will continue to work collaboratively to support parents/carers as they seek to provide their children with a stimulating home-learning environment.

The school employs a Parent Support Advisor for one morning per week to work with families who require additional support.

h) Pupils with Mental Health Concerns
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.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated pressures on young people that can lead to poorer mental health. We are aware that worries about the virus, the effect of illness and bereavement within families and isolation caused by lock downs and partial school closures will have negatively impacted the mental health of some of our pupils over the past two years. As a school, we are working hard to support pupil's wellbeing and to understand and address their mental health needs.

At Urchfont School, we employ an Emotional, Literacy Support Assistant to support pupils who need specific intervention in this area. In addition, each class follows the Jigsaw PSHE scheme of work. Classes have worry boxes where children can share concerns with class staff and weekly 'Chatter that Matters' sessions are held where children can have time to express what is on their mind.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

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

An objective is about change. It should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant (realistic) and time-bound (SMART), expressed in terms of people and outcomes, and set towards achieving a long-term goal. This means objectives focus on <u>outcomes</u> - real, practical change that can be expressed in terms of improvements.

Equality Objective: Mental Health
This school has decided that one of our new Equality Objectives will 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.

Academic attainment is important, but pupils also need to progress through their education feeling happy and self-confident. Urchfont is committed to providing a nurturing environment to help develop the resilience of our pupils to cope with the ups and downs and stresses of everyday life. Urchfont CE Primary School has decided that we will continue to develop our Equality Objectives that will 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.

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[i] The Equality Act 2010 and Schools
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf
[ii] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised