

# Equality Information 2019

## Larkrise School

### Introduction

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

Larkrise School encourages our pupils to be caring, tolerant 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 in calm ways. 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 a window helping them to comprehend wider society. This document details the steps Larkrise School is taking to ensure that all our pupils achieve their potential and participate in society as fully as they are able.

### SEN and Socio-economic Disadvantage

Pupils with SEND remain more likely to be eligible for free school meals than those without SEND (25.8% compared to 11.5%).<sup>(1)</sup> Pupils with EHC Plans are more likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils on SEN support (30.9% compared to 24.5%)<sup>(i)</sup>. This particularly affects Special Schools as national data shows that pupils eligible for free school meals comprise 37.7% of the pupil population in Special Schools compared to 25.4% in state-funded secondary schools and 28.4% in state-funded primary schools.<sup>(2)</sup> 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 other primary type of need. Nationally, in January 2018, 42% of pupils with a statement or EHC plan with this type of need were eligible for free school meals.<sup>(3)</sup>

The most prevalent categories of SEND (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 (Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Hearing Impairment; Visual Impairment).<sup>(4)</sup> *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.*<sup>(5)</sup>

Larkrise School 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. <sup>(6)</sup>

The document gives an overview of Larkrise School'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. 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.

### **Celebrating our Successes**

- **Continuing to ensure, wherever possible, students are included in activities that take place in the wider community. Building their confidence and skills to become active empowered members of the community.**
- **Continually adapting curriculum and assessment practices to meet the individual needs of all students.**
- **Ensuring de-escalation strategies and positive behaviour plans are in place to ensure all students access education.**
- **Investing in staff expertise and equipment to promote communication and choices amongst all cohorts of students.**

### **Maintained Special Schools - National Data**

Across England, the number and percentage of pupils with special educational needs has continued to rise (3). The percentage of school-age children identified with SEN in England is now 14.9%; this is the third consecutive rise, and an increase from 14.4% last year. <sup>(1)</sup>

Across schools in England, 354,000 pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans. This is 3.1% of children, up from 2.9% last year. SEN Support is now at 11.9%, up from 11.7% last year. <sup>(1)</sup>

There has been a change in the primary category of need at SEN Support: Speech, Language and Communications Needs (SLCN) are not the most prevalent, at 23%, replacing Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), which is now on 22.8%. Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) remain the most common need for those with an EHCP, also showing an increase from 28% to 29%. Children aged 11-15 years old account for the largest percentage of children and young people with EHC plans (36%) as at January 2019. <sup>(1)</sup>

The number of children with SEND in state primary schools has risen to 14%, and in state secondary schools to 12 %. The number in Special schools has increased by 6% to 120,000 pupils. <sup>(1)</sup>

### **Girls and Boys**

Special educational needs remain more prevalent in boys than girls. 4.2% of boys have an EHC plan compared to 1.6% girls. <sup>(1)</sup>

## **EQUALITY ACT 2010 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Ethnicity**

National data shows the most common type of need for pupils with an EHC plan is the same for all the ethnic groups i.e. Autistic 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 EHC plans (4.5 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively). Indian pupils had the lowest percentage of pupils with EHC plans at 1.8 per cent, compared with 2.9 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. <sup>(1)</sup>

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

3.2% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be English have an EHC plan. 3.0% of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English have an EHC plan.

The local authority's Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) 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. Wiltshire EMTAS provides 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.

As always, EMTAS 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*, he showed an increase in the number of EAL learners in a school is associated with improved attainment by English first language children. <sup>(7)</sup>

### **Disability/SEN (Special Educational Needs)**

***Every school is required to identify and address the SEN needs of the pupils that they support. Information about the support provided by Larkrise School for pupils with special education needs and for disabled pupils is detailed in the school website.***

### **Disabled Pupils and SEN Pupils – Attainment Data**

In Wiltshire 10.1 per cent of pupils with an EHC plan achieved 9–4 GCSE's in maths and English which is in line with national data as 10.5 per cent achieved the same. <sup>(2)</sup>

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.

## 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.

(Name of 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.

Larkrise 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. Larkrise 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.

Larkrise 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.

Larkrise School recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern, and our school actively promotes tolerance and respect. This school commemorates Holocaust Memorial Day as a key part of its commitment to informing pupils about the consequences of intolerance.

## **Sexual Orientation/Different Families/Gender Identity**

These are one of the fastest changing areas of society, and one that is being addressed by [Name of 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 Larkrise School has been recognising the differences and similarities between pupils. Same-sex couples are legally able to adopt children, and that 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.

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

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

The organisation 'Stonewall' has a wide range of information, advice and resources and [name of 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>

Larkrise School is aware of the support that we can access in relation to Gender Identity including that from the Local Authority. [Name of school] is able, with the help of the Local Authority if required, to appropriately support pupils and their parents/carers should the need arise.

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

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.

The suggested objectives have been developed to reflect current priorities such as mental health; access to high quality pre-school education; children who are looked-after by the LA, etc. Schools choose an equality objective that meets the specific needs of their school community.

An objective is about change. It should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant (realistic) and time-bound (SMART) and expressed in terms of people and outcomes, set towards achieving a long-

term goal. This means objectives focus on outcomes - real, practical change that can be expressed in terms of improvements.

### **Pupil mental health and wellbeing**

It is important that our pupils move on from this stage of their education feeling happy and self-confident. Larkrise School 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.

**Larkrise School has decided that our new Equality Objective 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.**

**This will include:**

- **The development of nurture groups where appropriate in the school**

**And**

- **Taking part in the Mental Health Support Teams trailblazer project alongside other selected schools from Wiltshire and BaNES**



## References:

- (1) Special Educational Needs in England: January 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2019>
- (2) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2019> National Tables: Special Educational Needs 2019 Table 5
- (3) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2018>
- (4) Deprivation and Education / Breaking the Link  
<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiwjcCxI73TAhXLicAKHe15C2gQFggiMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww3.lancashire.gov.uk%2Fcorporate%2Fweb%2Fviewdoc.asp%3Fid%3D50418&usg=AFQjCNHGHOAHpfgbEq-ASxwF56eD6XEWHg> Special Educational Needs and their Link to Poverty  
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/special-educational-needs-and-their-links-poverty>
- (5) This may be in the School Development Plan or in published Pupil Premium Information.
- (6) Equality Act 2010 Advice for Schools  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
- (7) Strand et al (2015), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and educational achievement in England: An analysis of the National Pupil Database (EEF)