

EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT 2015 - 2016

Legal Framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ***eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity*** and ***foster good relations*** in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote ***community cohesion***.

3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding Principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine 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:

- whether or not they are disabled or have a long term medical condition
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, or a long term medical condition, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised

- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people and those with a long term medical condition, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled or have a long term medical condition
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled (or people with a long term medical condition) and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We will seek to engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are likely to be affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people and those with a long term medical condition as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and both girls and boys
- gay people as well as straight

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people and those with a long term medical condition as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and both girls and boys
- gay people as well as straight.

Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence

We will maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Evidence relating to equalities will be integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

Principle 9: Measurable Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8).

The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. Our equality objectives are integrated into the school improvement plan.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The Curriculum

5. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

Ethos and Organisation

6. We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being

- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-Related Bullying

7. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability, medical conditions and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-semitism and islamophobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

8. Members of staff are given guidance on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

9. We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and Responsibilities

10. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

11. A member of the Governing Body will have a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

12. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

13. The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

14. All members of staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in classrooms and around the school

- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- have input to pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- have input to pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- consider teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- actively seek out relevant professional development
- offer care, guidance and support
- have input to agreed policy and practice regarding behaviour, discipline and exclusions as necessary
- work in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- work positively with the wider community.

Information and Resources

15. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all members of staff and the Governing Body and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers

16. All members of staff and the Governing Body will have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious Observance

17. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice while ensuring that all stakeholders understand clearly the school's Christian foundation, values and distinctiveness.

Staff Development and Training

18. We will ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the Policy

19. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring and review

20. We will collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

21. In particular we will collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status and gender.