

025 Equality

Responsibility: GH

Date: July 2017

Next Review: July 2021

1. Introduction

Since the Quality Act 2010 came into effect in April 2011 there has no longer been a requirements that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it reviews the impact on equalities of its policies and practices, and according to which it fulfils the specific duties to publish information and evidence, and to decide on specific and measurable objectives. The Equality Act has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality.

2. Legal Framework

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.

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

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.

3. Guiding Principles

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
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their religious or nonreligious 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 carrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, 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, good relations between disabled and nondisabled 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, and 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
- 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 and nondisabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are 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 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 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 8: WE base our policies and practices on sound evidence.

We 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 is 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.

4. The Curriculum

We will 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.

5. Ethos and organisation

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 wellbeing
- 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

6. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

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 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

7. Roles and responsibilities

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

A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

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

All staff are expected to:

- Keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver the curriculum and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language

8. Information and resources

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

All staff and Governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

9. Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

10. Staff development and training

We 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.

11. Breaches of the policy

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

12. Monitoring and review

WE collect, study and use qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular, we 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.

Background

DfE – the Equality Act 2010 and Schools 2014