

Equality Policy

Rationale

When the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there was no longer a requirement for schools to 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 assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives. This policy has also been reviewed in line with the Department for Education document 'Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools' November 2014.

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, religion and sexual identity.

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

We recognise these duties are essential, and that they 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.

We recognise these duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework, and that they 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

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 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, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that 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
- gender 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 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, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language or discrimination

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:

- 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 non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- children from disadvantaged backgrounds

Principle 6: We seek advice and guidance

We aim to consult and involve widely - people affected by a policy or activity should be 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 girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations

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 wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations
- gender variant people

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

Principle 9: Data

Each year we formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published, in relation to

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- disadvantaged

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this will have an impact if we set ourselves challenging and measurable objectives to demonstrate this commitment.

The curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect principles 1-7.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed 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
- safeguarding children in education

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 the **Legal Framework** section:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- prejudice which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism

There is clear guidance for teachers defining how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the Local Authority (LA) about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with. We also draw on the support of Northumbria Police and partner organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card.

Roles and responsibilities

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.

The Governing Body has a responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The 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:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the nine principles above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

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.

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.

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.

Breaches of the policy

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 Evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and 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, language, religious affiliation, disadvantage and gender.

Author	Creation Date
This model policy was developed in Derbyshire, drawing for some its phrasing from documents developed by other local authorities and by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.	January 2011
Reviewed, Agreed & Adopted	Revision date
Staff & Full Governing Body	February 2012, May 2015
Staff & Policies & Resources Committee 1	October 2018, November 2021, Autumn 2022, Autumn 2023 Autumn, 2024
Policies & Resources Committee 1	November 2021
Signed	

Background and acknowledgements:

- The list of principles at paragraph 4 is adapted from material in Equality Impact Assessments: a workbook, published by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families in December 2007, and revised in November 2010.
- The model statement takes into account guidance issued by other local authorities. These include Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dudley, Durham, Hertfordshire, Newcastle and Sheffield.

Features of the model

- The model contains the following features.
- The term ethnicity is used in preference to race or racial group, on the grounds that it better reflects the intentions and concerns of race relations legislation.
- There are references where appropriate to religious affiliation and identity.
- There are references where appropriate to sexual identity and to challenging homophobia.
- The duty to promote community cohesion is integrated into the policy, particularly but not only in the third of the seven principles.
- Disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexuality are referred to in alphabetical order, not in the order in which legislation requiring equality schemes and policies was introduced.