

Hipsburn Primary School Equality Policy

November 2019



MISSION STATEMENT

“The most valuable gift we can give a learner is to enable them to think for themselves, to care for others and thereby acquire a sense of self-worth and confidence which can be used to benefit both society and the individual.”

Introductory notes

Since the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there is no longer a requirement 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 assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives.

This model statement has been adapted slightly from one which was developed in Derbyshire in the period 2007-08, and first published in 2009. It has been amended in the light of the Equality Act 2010, and of the specific duties that the Act is likely to entail. There is fuller information about the background in notes at the end.

Legal framework

Legislation

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- ☐ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ☐ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- ☐ Human Rights Act 1998
- ☐ Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014
- ☐ Education and Inspections Act 2006
- ☐ Equality Act 2010
- ☐ The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- ☐ The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:
 - ☐ Eliminate discrimination
 - ☐ Advance equality of opportunity
 - ☐ GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Hipsburn Primary School fully understands the principles of the Equality Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.

A protected characteristic, under the Act, is as follows:

- ☐ Age
- ☐ Disability
- ☐ Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- ☐ Sex (including transgender people)
- ☐ Gender reassignment
- ☐ Maternity and pregnancy
- ☐ Religion and belief
- ☐ Sexual orientation

- ☐ Marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- ☐ In relation to admissions.
- ☐ In the way it provides education for pupils.
- ☐ In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- ☐ By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Hipsburn Primary School will :

- ☐ Promote race equality and have due regard to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
- ☐ Promote disability equality throughout the school, ensuring the equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, eliminating disability related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- ☐ Promote gender equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.
- ☐ Respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within the social community. Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- ☐ Oppose all forms of prejudice and recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.
- ☐ Ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- ☐ Ensure their Primary Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- ☐ Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- ☐ Foster positive attitudes and relationships through our shared vision and a sense of cohesion and belonging. This is then embedded throughout our community and promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- ☐ Ensure that policies, procedures and activities put the community at the centre both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.
- ☐ Ensure everyone is inclusive, that everyone challenges inappropriate language and

behaviour, and that they respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment. Inclusive support is also shown for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a deep level of awareness of issues surrounding equalities at all times.

School statement on equality

Every person in our school community is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a community where we 'motivate one another'. Everyone in all their unique difference should be able to thrive, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socio economic background, academicability, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

We are committed to promoting the understanding of the principles and practices of equality – treating all members of our school community as individuals, according to their needs, with an awareness of our diverse society and appreciating the value of difference. We actively seek to challenge discrimination and we promote an anti-bullying stance which makes clear the unacceptability of racist, disablist and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language.

Our equality objectives are:

□ To create a community that protects, respects and celebrates individuality and difference between people of different backgrounds, genders, faiths, abilities, ethnic minorities and those with disabilities.

□ To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to achieve their potential and make a positive contribution to our school community, promoting fairness and equality for all.

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, gender identity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

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.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and more recent directives to teach about character and values through SMSC in the curriculum.

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1. In fulfilling the legal obligations, we are guided by nine principles: 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.
 2. We welcome our duty to promote positive behaviour and safety, and to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
 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.

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

Guiding Principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all 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 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 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 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:

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

Principle 6: We 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.
- 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:

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 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: Objectives

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

- disability
- ethnicity
- gender.

5. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.
6. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
7. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The curriculum

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

Ethos and organisation

9. 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

10. 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 antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
11. There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.
12. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly 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

13. 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.
14. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
15. 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.
16. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
17. All staff are expected to:
 - promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom

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- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 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

- 18.** 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.
- 19.** 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

- 20.** 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

- 21.** 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

- 22.** 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

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

- 24.** 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.

Source: This model policy was developed in Derbyshire, drawing for some its phrasing from documents developed by other local authorities.

Background and acknowledgements

- 1.** As mentioned in the introductory note on page 1, this model statement is adapted from one originally produced in Derbyshire.
- 2.** In its overall framework the Derbyshire policy on equalities in education is based on the race equality policy that it developed in response to the Race Relations Act 2000, and that was included in *Here, There and Everywhere: belonging, identity and equality in schools* published by Trentham Books in 2004.

3. 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.
4. 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

5. 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.
 - 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.

The Strategy Governors sub-committee adopted this policy – Autumn Term 2019

Date of next review – Autumn Term 2020