

Slaley First School

Equality Policy

1) Our Ethos/mission

The Governing Body and school is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief. Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where physical and cultural diversity is celebrated.

The school opposes all forms of harassment, prejudice related incidents and discrimination and publicly celebrates diversity. The school also actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is respected and inclusion is a strength of the school. Advancing diversity is integral to us in our drive to raise standards for all.

We aim to empower pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences within their community. Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all pupils. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff are able to confidently deal with any forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant LA policy and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with prejudice related incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policy. Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with these and confident in their knowledge that such behaviour is always unacceptable. Staff are trained to deal effectively with prejudice related incidents.

Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context, of the school's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's single equality policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

All members of the school community should actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children:

- ❑ girls and boys;
- ❑ minority ethnic and faith groups;
- ❑ children who need support to learn English as an additional language;
- ❑ children with special educational needs;
- ❑ gifted and talented children;
- ❑ children who are vulnerable.

2) Legal Duties

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.
- Foster good relations between people of different groups.

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. Protected characteristics under the act covers the groups listed below:

- Age
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to fulfil specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish equality information- to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions (**we will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child**)
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging.

- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development.
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit
- Ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda
- Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's single equality policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure.
- Ensure all forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility are treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

3) Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

Slaley First School is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discriminated against or by our staff or other members of our community. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur we address them immediately and report them to the Local Authority using their guidance material

4) Policy and Planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race and disability equality, will be considered and recorded whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation

5) Equality in Employment

The Equality in Employment Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discriminatory laws with a single Act. It simplified the law, making it easier for people to understand and comply with. It also strengthened the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality. This section summarises the Public Sector Equality Duty in relation to information on employees.

What we are doing to foster good relationships

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSE and citizenship and across the curriculum.

- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

Other ways we address Equality Issues

- We maintain records of all training relating the Equalities.
- Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities.
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.

Publishing Equality Objectives

We have set ourselves the following objectives for 2017-18:

- Narrowing any gaps in the performance and attainment of groups of pupils (between boys and girls, children with EAL, those with SEND's) within the new cohort for 2017-18.
- Ensuring all staff take account of factors that may affect children, parents and their families.
- Increasing community and parental engagement and continuing to build on our existing programme of multi – cultural events to celebrate diversity (to include seeking the views and ideas of parents/carers).
- Ensuring that all policies and procedures reflect current legislation and best practice.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

Roles and responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing body

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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy.

Updated: September 2017

To be reviewed: September 2019