

Blakedown C E Primary School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Number 1.9

Equality Policy



POLICY FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

(see also Equality Statement; Inclusion, SEND, Safeguarding)

1. STRATEGY

- 1.1 This single policy replaces separate policies the school has on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It reflects the legal duties set out in the **Equality Act 2010** and **non-statutory guidance** set out by the government in December 2011 and March 2012.
- 1.2 Duties in the Equality Act 2010 and its Schedules identify nine equality strands (known as Protected Characteristics):
- 1.2.1 **disability** - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
 - 1.2.2 **ethnicity** (including Gypsy and Traveller groups) - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
 - 1.2.3 **gender** - A man or a woman
 - 1.2.4 **gender identity and transgender** - A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment.
 - 1.2.5 **faith, religion and belief** - Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
 - 1.2.6 **marriage and civil partnership** - Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
 - 1.2.7 **sexual orientation (homophobia)** - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both

sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

1.2.8 **pregnancy and maternity/paternity** - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.

1.2.9 **age**- A person of a particular age (e.g. 32 year old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.

1.3 Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimization.

1.4 We aim within Blakedown CE Primary School, to provide equality of opportunity for all children. We want all our pupils to achieve success during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, policies and practices do not prevent any child from achieving to the best of their ability.

1.5 We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence and sense of joy by positively working to promote equality of opportunity.

1.6 Children have equality of opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. Children are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom. Where children are not able to participate in activities appropriate alternatives are offered.

2. POLICY

At Blakedown C of E Primary School everyone is encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other. We value and take joy in the fact that everyone is an individual, has their own interests, thoughts and opinions and believe that all children should be able to learn in a supportive and

accepting environment where all can flourish, **achieve** and prepare themselves for a future where they will **serve** fully as positive members of society. They will find joy in the building of positive relationships with all staff and their peers; knowing who they are individually and being responsible for their own actions. They will start to identify how they and others are '**fearfully and wonderfully made.**' Psalm 139.

In fulfilling the legal obligations and establishing our school ethos, we are guided by 9 principles:

2.1. Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

- 2.1.1 We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:
- 2.1.2 whether or not they are disabled,
- 2.1.3 whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status,
- 2.1.4 whatever their gender or gender identity,
- 2.1.5 whatever their sexual identity.

2.2 Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

- 2.2.1 Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. 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:
 - 2.2.1.1 disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
 - 2.2.1.2 ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
 - 2.2.1.3 gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised;
 - 2.2.1.4 sexual identity.

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

- 2.3.1 Policies, procedure and activities promote:
 - 2.3.1.1 positive attitudes and actions towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
 - 2.3.1.2 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;
 - 2.3.1.3 mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

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

2.4.1 Policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development:

2.4.2 whether or not they are disabled;

2.4.3 whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;

2.4.4 whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

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

2.5.1 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:

2.5.1.1 disabled and non-disabled;

2.5.1.2 people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;

2.5.1.3 girls and boys, women and men;

2.5.1.4 LGBTQ+ people as well as heterosexual.

2.6 Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

2.6.1 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. Consultation involves:

2.6.1.1 disabled and non-disabled;

2.6.1.2 people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;

2.6.1.3 girls and boys, women and men;

2.6.1.4 LGBTQ+ people as well as heterosexual.

2.7 Principle 7: We address prejudice and prejudice related bullying

2.7.1 We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties listed above:

2.7.1.1 prejudices around disability and special educational needs;

2.7.1.2 prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;

2.7.1.3 prejudice reflecting sexism or homophobia.

2.8 Principle 8: Society as a whole should benefit

2.8.1 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:

2.8.1.1 disabled and non-disabled;

2.8.1.2 people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;

2.8.1.3 girls and boys, women and men;

2.8.1.4 LGBTQ+ people as well as heterosexual.

2.9 Principle 9: Objectives

2.9.1 Throughout the year, the school will plan on-going events to raise awareness of equality and diversity. This may include a focus on disability, respect for other cultures, religions and beliefs, anti-homophobia/gay pride, gender equality, developing community cohesion and an understanding of the effects of discrimination. This will be set out as equality objectives in the school improvement plan.

3. PROCEDURE

3.1 The role of the class teacher. Class teachers recognise their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated equally and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

3.2 When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

3.3 We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history. In geography the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

3.4 All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book, and draw them to the attention of the Head teacher.

3.5 The Role of the Head teacher. It is the Head teacher's role to implement the school's policy on equality and diversity, and s/he is supported by the governing body in so doing.

3.6 It is the Head teacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

3.7 The Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against.

- 3.8 The Head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.
- 3.9 The Head teacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.
- 3.10 The Head teacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.
- 3.11 **Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans (Schedule 10)**
Schools are required to:
- 3.11.1 Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- 3.11.2 Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- 3.11.3 Provide information in an accessible format.
- 3.11.4 Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will
- 3.11.4.1 Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum
- 3.11.4.2 Improve the physical environment
- 3.11.4.3 Improve provision of information.
- 3.11.5 The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The school will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the **relevant admissions authority** as appropriate.

4. MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:
- 4.1.1 monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- 4.1.2 monitor the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- 4.1.3 require the Head teacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- 4.1.4 take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;

- 4.1.5 monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.
- 4.2 The Role of *Governors*. In this policy statement the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally
- 4.3 The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:
- 4.3.1 admissions;
 - 4.3.2 attainment;
 - 4.3.3 exclusions;
 - 4.3.4 rewards and sanctions;
 - 4.3.5 parent and pupil questionnaires;
 - 4.3.6 retention rates.
- 4.4 The governing body ensures that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.
- 4.5 The governing body will, in its annual report, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.
- 4.6 The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have subject to the admissions criteria
- 4.7 The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race.
- 4.8 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually, or earlier if it is considered necessary.

5. **Linked policies**

Other Relevant Policies that cross reference with this one are:
Inclusion Policy, Positive Handling, Health, Safety & Welfare Policy, Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policy.