



Single Equality Policy

Reviewed: February 2016

Date of next review: February 2017



Introduction

This Single Equality Policy is part of the school's approach to its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as laid out in the Equality Act 2010 (the 'Act').

Under the PSED all public sector bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics- between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The Act requires schools to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED
- To prepare and publish equality objectives

This policy outlines what our school does to meet point 1 above; that is to comply with the PSED. In devising this policy reference has been made to the Act and also to the document 'Equality Act 2010:

Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and local Authorities' published by the Department of Education.

Under the Act the protected characteristics are defined as:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

These groups that share protected characteristics will be referred to as protected groups in this Policy.

In addition the school has identified other vulnerable groups where it needs to make special efforts to ensure that all learners fulfil their potential. These groups are also covered by this policy. They are (but not limited to):

- Those pupils and others with special educational needs
- Those pupils who are gifted and talented
- Looked After Children and their carers
- Children adopted from Care
- Pupils with poor records of attendance at school
- Others such as those who are sick; those who are young carers; those whose families are under stress
- Pupils from families with low incomes
- Pupils with English as an Additional language
- Any other learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

Rationale

Bromham Lower School is committed to ensuring that we do not discriminate against anyone, be they adult or child, on the grounds of their protected characteristic, either directly or indirectly or through harassment or victimisation.

This Single Equality Policy is not a stand-alone document. Its main function is to present a set of principles which permeate all other school policies and practices.

As a school, we recognise that there are some core inclusive values that underpin this Single Equality Policy and ensure respect for all. These are:

- **Fairness:** no school policy or procedure will unfairly advantage or disadvantage any member of the school community
- **Trust:** we begin with the premise that all members of the school community will behave with good intent towards each other
- **Participation:** no member of our school community will be barred in any way from participating in any school activity which could be reasonably expected to be open to all. For those school activities where it would be common practice to be chosen or elected, (i.e. representation at a meeting, on a committee, on the school council or on the Governing Body) we will be able to demonstrate that the selection process was fair and transparent (see below)

- **Consultation and negotiation:** Representatives of different stakeholder groups within the school community (i.e. pupils, staff, parents, governors) and of all protected groups (where appropriate) will be consulted over major policy decisions being taken by the school. The school will make an "equality impact assessment" in relation to any major policy decision. In some situations, where it is reasonable to predict that the ultimate decision will have a significant impact upon the experience in school of different stakeholders, or protected groups, the school recognises that it will be appropriate to negotiate, rather than consult.
- **Collaboration:** we will work together as a team in which every member has a view and a voice which is worthy of consideration
- **Transparency:** the reasoning behind decisions made in our school will be open and subject to scrutiny

In line with British Values we strive to build, within our school, our locality and the partnerships with which we are involved, a strong and cohesive community, which prepares young people for adult life in:

- A diverse, inclusive society
- A welcoming community that fosters positive relationships and values diversity as a rich learning resource
- A barrier-free community founded upon a joint sense of belonging

We strive to nurture in our pupils and staff the personal qualities, which we consider essential in a member of a school community and in a citizen of the wider community and society which values equality and respect for all:

- Trust
- Respect
- Forgiveness
- Happiness
- Service
- Creativity
- Compassion
- Quality
- Courage
- Resilience
- Agape (unconditional love)

Every member of our school community will be challenged and held to account for upholding the rationale of this Single Equality Policy.

We recognise that individual members of staff, governors, parents or pupils may have different views on a number of equality issues. Our main priority is not to demand that anyone changes their views but to ensure that, as a school, we clearly define what the school considers acceptable/unacceptable and how everyone is expected to behave in school. No matter what individual people's views might be, our first priority is to ensure that the school complies with every aspect of equality legislation and the duty to promote community cohesion.

The school context

Significant features of our school, considered by Staff and Governors are as follows:

- Large village school predominantly white British. We have 81.6% of White British pupils within our school
- Pupil mobility is low

- Staff turnover is low
- 5.25% of our children are EAL (English as Additional Language)
- 51.1% of the school population are girls and the boy/ girl balance has remained more or less stable over the last three years
- High level of stability
- Only 2.29% are eligible for free school meals and the school has a very low deprivation level
- 4 children within the school have EHC Plans (Education, Care and Health Plans) 1 child continues to have a Statement of Special Educational Need, this is due to be transferred to EHC Plan in the 2016-17 school year.
- Low self-esteem, low expectations and peer group pressure among a small minority of families
- Low parental support or different parental expectations in relation to pupils among a small minority of our families

These features are representative of the population in the geographical catchment area of the school.

The school's approach to promoting equality

Our school works in the following ways to secure equality and respect for all.

A) Current policy and practice in the school shows commitment to meeting the duty to promote equality for pupils, staff and parents by:

- Ensuring that our mission statement, aims and core values relate to every member of our school community
- Ensuring that we regularly evaluate the impact of all school policies (particularly admissions and attendance, behaviour, collective worship, target-setting, teaching and learning and staff appraisal) on the protected and vulnerable groups as identified in this policy and take action to improve our policy and practice, where necessary having specific actions on the School Development Plan
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, protected groups are reflected in the language and images of all publications (including the publicity to promote school events, website)
- Ensuring that the school's policy on school uniform makes reasonable allowances for expressions of identity and ease of use for pupils who are disabled ("reasonable allowances" to be limited by the extent to which adaptation of the school uniform might be used to represent an affiliation to a group or belief which might not be in keeping with the other key principles laid out in this policy.) Cases are considered on an individual basis
- Ensuring that, wherever possible and without artificiality or unbalanced representation, there are positive images of the protected groups in school policies, in school publications, in learning resources and in displays
- Ensuring that the school has clear, commonly understood processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice
- Ensuring that equality values are represented in the everyday language and behaviour evident in school and that senior leaders regularly monitor the school climate in relation to this, in order that tolerance levels in relation to language or behaviour are maintained
- Ensuring that the school makes the strongest possible efforts to minimise any barrier to the participation and engagement of parents with regard to their child's development and in other aspects of school life

B) The school can clearly demonstrate how it assesses the impact on equalities of its current policies and practices for pupils, staff and parents by:

- Ensuring that the school has consistent and reliable procedures for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour towards the protected and vulnerable groups

- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the protected and vulnerable groups

C) The school has secure arrangements for ensuring equality of opportunity with regard to the recruitment, development and retention of employees by:

- Ensuring that, whilst adhering to equalities law and fair recruitment practice, every attempt is made to achieve diversity in the workforce and governing body which is representative of that within the school, the local community and the wider community.
- Ensuring that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues, complaints, allocation of responsibilities, professional development and opportunities for all staff to progress are monitored to ensure that equality is upheld as a central consideration when judgments and decisions are made
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this Single Equality policy and wider equality issues through staff training and professional development and that this is an essential element of the induction training for all staff

D) The school demonstrates equality with regard to the educational opportunities available to the pupils in the protected and vulnerable groups by:

- Ensuring that there are opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard
- Ensuring that, where possible and appropriate and without contrivance or artificiality, curriculum themes and content reflect the rights and interests of the protected groups and promote greater tolerance towards them, across a breadth of curriculum which is wider than planned direct teaching within RE, PSHE Education and citizenship
- Ensuring that the curriculum offers opportunities for all pupils to learn about the history of inequality and oppression in relation to the protected groups
- Ensuring that all of the protected and vulnerable groups have the same opportunity to access educational visits and other school trips as any other pupil in the school
- Ensuring that all pupils can participate equally in all aspects of school life, including extended school activities
- Ensuring that school events or activities, including those arising from the extended school offer, celebrate diversity
- Recognising that some adjustments are needed for some groups to ensure equal opportunities, e.g. DfE (Department for Education) funding, extra curricular activities, e.g. pupil premium or funding for other initiatives residential visits, visits outside of school
- Ensuring the school is physically accessible to all and has an Accessibility Plan which is reviewed every three years
- Committing to completing an access action plan to consider changes that would have to be made on the arrival of a pupil or member of staff with a physical disability
- Purchasing and using a range of specific equipment to enhance learning and support specific learning frameworks
- Providing support and time for any physical intervention programmes to be completed successfully
- Working closely with outside support agencies to ensure the most effective support is in place (physio, psychologist, Education Welfare Officer)
- Completing specific, targeted training to enable all staff to meet the needs of individuals
- Providing a range of extra curricular activities to allow choice and access for all
- Supporting individual/ families with difficulties over a given period of time (family crisis, bullying incidents etc) using a mentoring or counselling approach (HT /Parent support worker, Local Authority counsellor)

E) The school demonstrates equality of opportunity with regard to the achievements of pupils in the protected and vulnerable groups by:

- Ensuring that the school has effective processes for monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of all pupils and the comparative attainment and achievement of pupils in the protected and vulnerable groups. Thereafter ensuring, where there are discrepancies, that appropriate intervention is put into place which will narrow the gap between the attainment and achievement of all pupils and of those pupils from the protected and vulnerable groups, where these are lower and need to be addressed
- Striving to identify particular needs as soon as possible to enable early support and / or intervention to take place
- Making provision to support and target specific areas of need including Tracks, Soundswrite Programmes and programmes designed to support social and emotional development.
- Preparing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans to focus on learning priorities
- Providing extra support via our Interventions team to help pupils meet their targets

F) The school demonstrates equality with regard to attendance, exclusion and anti-bullying by:

- Ensuring it has effective attendance, behaviour and anti-bullying policies which are applied equally to all groups and do not disadvantage any member of our school community
- Ensuring that the school has processes for avoiding the exclusion of any pupil and that these processes are equally applied to and equally effective for pupils in protected and vulnerable groups
- Ensuring that the school can clearly demonstrate the steps it takes to eliminate harassment and bullying of pupils or staff in the protected and vulnerable groups
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the protected and vulnerable groups

G) The school's links with local organisations and community groups represent its commitment to raising the awareness of its pupils, staff and parents with regard to the protected and vulnerable groups by:

- Ensuring that the school has links or partnerships with other schools, colleges, local or national groups, charities and organisations which also promote equality
- Ensuring that the school does not have links, partnerships or connections with local or national groups or organisations which overtly promote prejudice or intolerance or, in the way in which they operate, exclude or disenfranchise members of any of the equality groups identified in this policy

H) We seek the views of our school community, and the wider community, including views on equality issues by:

- Consulting with parents about specific aspects (homework, website, educational visits etc.)
- Consulting with children about specific aspects (playground, outdoor environment, websites etc.)
- Issuing regular parent, staff and pupil questionnaires where data produced is thoroughly analysed and relevant outcomes fed into our School Improvement Plan
- Providing evenings for parents arranged at specific key stages in school life to allow parents to ask questions, share opinions and concerns and regularly enter into dialogue with the appropriate staff team members
- Providing a verbal dissemination of the school Newsletter when this is appropriate
- Providing a range of ways of communicating between school and parents that meet parents' circumstances and needs including: written reports, parents evenings, open afternoons
- Developing parents' understanding of the curriculum by offering Key Stage specific curriculum evenings for parents which keep them informed of new initiatives and school practice, and offering Parent Surgeries as additional 'drop in' sessions
- Keeping parents informed of school matters even where we feel they are unlikely to engage
- Providing IEP (Individual Education Plan), TAF (Team Around the Family) and EHC Plan (Education, Health and Care Plan) meetings for parents and all school staff involved in the learning of children with specific individual needs allowing them to come together to report on the child's progress and plan future targets as a team

- Encouraging an "open door" policy where parents feel comfortable to come into chat to teachers or Senior Staff members when they have concerns or questions

I) With specific regard to disability equality:

- Ensuring that the school recognises the "social model" of disability - that a person who has an impairment may become disabled if reasonable adjustments are not provided in relation to that impairment (and is therefore a "disabled person") - over and above the "medical model" - that a person is disabled by physical or mental impairments (and is therefore a "person with disabilities")
- The school ensures that reasonable adjustments are considered in order to include all disabled young people living within the school's locality

J) Some further examples (not a definitive list) of how we seek to address equality issues in our school and improve the access and experience of all protected and vulnerable groups, are provided as follows:

- Equal opportunities to join committees and take up responsibilities
- Provide assemblies led by church leaders, parents, charity fund-raisers, the police etc
- Providing a range of assemblies which balance the PSHE Education programme with a range of faiths
- Celebrating individual and personal success in assemblies
- Integration of Values and SEAL (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning) across the school
- Ensuring a rich and relevant curriculum, which celebrates diversity and cultural similarities and differences. In our development of a rich and flexible curriculum we strive to ensure that the curriculum equips pupils to actively promote community cohesion and ensures their understanding of faith and ethnic diversity and the common values underpinning society
- Our creative curriculum themes and special curriculum events allow us to celebrate and explore cultural identity
- Our RE Scheme of Work explores all the main religions, as well as the achievements and motivations of those inspired by their faith, their sense of moral duty or commitment to active citizenship
- Delivering a PSHE Education curriculum which promotes positive attitudes towards minority groups
- Through PSHE Education and the SEAL programme we encourage children to be reflective and empathetic, continually considering the impact of their decisions and behaviours on others and to be aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights
- Fund raising for local, national and international charities, ensuring understanding of the purpose and impact of the activity through our School Council and Whole School Fundraising Initiatives
- Encouraging pupil led campaigns to equalise opportunity for those less fortunate through elements of our Business and Enterprise initiatives, and school council
- Offer a Performance opportunity for every child in the school within every academic year

K) The school takes seriously its duty to promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

L) All teaching and support staff, and some governors have had PREVENT training and are alert to react to any concerns raised regarding extremist behaviour. Concerns are recorded and filed with the Designated Officer (the Head Teacher) and these are acted on appropriately. Where possible families are involved.

Specific responsibilities

The Head Teacher and Chair of Governors or designated Governor will maintain a strategic overview of the currency and efficacy of this Single Equality Policy. Equality objectives will be on the School

Development Plan and will be clearly identified. The cycle for review of progress towards the equality targets on the School Development Plan will be clearly laid out and will follow that for the plan as a whole.

Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

This policy and the process of self evaluation which informs the resultant equality objectives is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and all staff.

Its effectiveness is to be annually evaluated by staff, Governors and Headteacher.

Our school will judge the effectiveness of this Equality Policy by:

- Evaluating progress towards equality objectives as specified on the School Development Plan (and their impact)
- Canvassing the views of the stakeholders pupils, parents, staff, Governors and community representatives (through questionnaires and discussion)

Action planning

Our school recognises that it is a legal requirement to develop specific objectives under its public Sector Equality Duty. These will be incorporated but clearly identified within our School Development Plan.

Agreed by:

Chair of Governors:

Headteacher:

Ratified on: