

Rhodes Avenue Primary School

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

November 2022

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Context

The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the *Equality Act 2010*) is a duty placed on public authorities such as Rhodes Avenue Primary School (hereafter referred to as the school) to ensure that it considers the needs of all pupils and staff in the day-to-day running of the school when shaping policy and delivering services.

The Duty requires public authorities to consider how different groups of people will be affected by their activities so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and that they meet different people's needs.

The school recognises 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*.

This EDI Policy recognises our whole school community – pupils, students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies

School Ethos

At Rhodes Avenue, we want our children to:

- Know who they are
- Respect others for who they are
- Never stop learning

Aims

In order to sustain equal and inclusive practices and ensure that they are embedded across all aspects of school life the aims of this policy are to:

- maintain an atmosphere of dignity and fairness based on the school's ethos and vision;
- encourage pupils and the school community to develop themselves and respect differences and to become independent learners and take responsibility for their actions and be good citizens;
- build a cohesive school community where all stakeholders can thrive;
- embed key school values, including British Values:
 - Personal values (in relation to self)
 - Moral values (in relation to others)
 - Social values (in relation to community/society)
- promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Due Regard

The school recognises its responsibilities under the 2010 Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

By having due regard the school is incorporating the three aims of the public sector duty as part of its decision-making processes and it will reflect on how it:

- acts as an employer;
- develops, evaluates and reviews policy;
- designs, delivers and evaluates its services;
- commissions and procures from others.

To advance equality of opportunity the school will aspire to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people connected to their protected characteristics;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Curriculum

The 2010 Act does not apply to the content of the school curriculum. However the way in which a school provides education – the delivery of the curriculum – is explicitly included.

As such, the school is free to include a full range of issues, ideas and materials in their syllabus, and to expose pupils to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, without the risk of a legal challenge being brought alleging discrimination. The school will ensure that the way in which issues are taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination. (See Appendix for Department for Education examples)

Protected Characteristics

The 2010 Act states that the following are protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;

- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Guiding principles

In our pursuit of our own advancement of the equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and fulfilling our obligations under the Equality Act the school is guided by the following principles:

Principle 1

All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners, 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 sex and gender reassignment status;
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- whatever their sexual orientation.

Principle 2

We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equitably does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not unlawfully discriminate and will take account of the differences of life-experience, outlook, background and the barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds are celebrated and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- sex, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and men and women are recognised, shared and celebrated;
- religion, belief or faith background;
- gender reassignment;
- sexual orientation.

Principle 3

We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

Our policies, procedures and activities will promote:

- positive attitudes towards 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 people of different sexes or different sexual orientations or gender identities and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4

We observe good equitable practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that our policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment and promotion and continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whatever their age, sex, gender reassignment status and sexual orientation, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5

We consult and involve our school community

Whenever practicable, our school community will be given accessible opportunities to be involved with the development of the *EDI Policy*. Should opportunities arise, they will be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to this policy. Parents/carers will also be informed of any incident related to this policy which would directly affect their child.

Principle 6

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 through the curriculum and school practice and procedure.

Principle 7

We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equity, diversity, inclusion and achievement in relation to the following groups:

- pupils with disabilities and special educational needs;
- looked after children;
- pupil premium pupils;
- EAL pupils;
- Boys and girls.

Principle 8

Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published and the engagement in which we have been involved in relation to:

- disability and special educational needs;
- looked after children;
- pupil premium pupils;
- EAL pupils;
- Boys and girls.

Every three years, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equity and diversity objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equity and diversity objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Ethos and organization

The school's *Guiding Principles* apply to policies and practices with regard to:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement;
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being;
- teaching and learning;
- assessment;
- 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

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice, including prejudice relating to:

- disability and special educational needs;
- racism and xenophobia, and any forms of prejudice directed towards religious groups and communities, for example:
 - antisemitism and Islamophobia,
 - those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- sexism, homophobia and transphobia.

We take seriously our obligation to report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Equity and Diversity Objectives

The school will choose the equality objectives that best suit the school's circumstances and demography, objectives that will contribute to the welfare of our pupils and the school community. They will be used as a tool to help improve the school experience of a range of different pupils.

The equity objectives will reflect the school's needs and be achievable. They will arise from analysis of school data or other information where or when the school has identified an area where there is potential for improvement on equity and diversity.

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 Head teacher 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 the school's inclusive and collaborative ethos and report and/or deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur and plan and deliver the school's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural and Personal, Social, Health and Economic programmes of study.

Inclusion

The school respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and complies with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. The school will 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.

Links to other documents

- SEND Policy;
- Admissions Policy;
- SMSC Policy;
- Values Policy;
- Behaviour for Learning Policy;
- Accessibility Policy;
- School Improvement Plan;
- Anti-bullying Policy;
- Target Tracker Data;
- Collective Worship.

Procedures for policy monitoring and dissemination

The policy statement will be reviewed according to the EDI Committee's Schedule of Policies. All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy. Copies are available to parents on the website or by request.

Persons responsible

Head teacher
Deputy Head
EDI Committee

APPENDIX

1. Curriculum Examples

Some examples can best explain the distinction between content and delivery of the curriculum as the Act applies:

- A boy complains that it is sex discrimination for him to be required to do a module on feminist thought.
- A girl complains that putting *The Taming of the Shrew* on the syllabus is discriminatory; or a Jewish pupil objects to having to study *The Merchant of Venice*.
- A fundamentalist Christian objects to the teaching of evolution in science lessons unbalanced by the teaching of "intelligent design".
- A school does a project to mark Gay Pride Week. A heterosexual pupil claims that he finds this embarrassing and that it discriminates against him on grounds of his sexual orientation; a Christian or a Muslim pupil objects to it on religious grounds.
- A Muslim pupil objects to the works of Salman Rushdie being included on a reading list.

All of the above are examples of complaints against the content of the curriculum, and none of them would give rise to a valid complaint under the Act. However, valid complaints that the curriculum is being delivered in a discriminatory way might well arise in situations such as the following:

- A teacher uses the fact that 'The Taming of the Shrew' is a set book to make derogatory generalisations about the inferiority of women, in a way which makes the girls in the class feel belittled. Or, in teaching 'The Merchant of Venice', he encourages the class to laugh at a Jewish pupil.
- In class discussions, black pupils are never called on and the teacher makes it clear that she is not interested in their views.
- Girls are not allowed to do design technology or boys are discouraged from doing food technology. This is not intrinsic to the curriculum itself but to the way in which education is made available to pupils.
- The girls' cricket team is not allowed equal access to the cricket nets, or the boys' hockey team is given far better resources than the girls' team. This would be less favourable delivery of education rather than to do with the sports curriculum per se.