



# Equality Policy

<b>Committee:</b>	LGB
<b>Agreed by committee:</b>	Autumn 2019
<b>Review frequency:</b>	Annual (Action plan every 4 years)
<b>Next scheduled review date:</b>	Autumn 2023

## Introduction

Stoughton Infant School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

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.

The Single Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new Equality Duty that covers all seven of the equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In this school we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the school community and its life, everyone will be treated equally. This Single Equality Policy summarises the school's approach in ensuring equality for all.

## Approach

- 1. All learners are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognize, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages, which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
- 6. We foster the development of the whole child.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve well in all aspects of their education so they have the tools and skills they need to thrive in the next step of their education.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

## The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. Age, marriage, and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics" but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils. The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

## **The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

## **Two “specific duties”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6th 2012
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

## **Eliminating Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the school.
- We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment, which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity

## **Prejudice and Prejudice Based Bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents

## **Equal Opportunity between Different Groups**

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions strategies.
- We monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this information to support school improvement.
- We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age appropriate literacy and number skills.
- We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan designed to:
  - increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment.
  - improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.
- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as disadvantaged pupils and children receiving the service funding.

## **Fostering 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, diversity, and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE 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
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school

## **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. The Local 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 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.

### **Equal Opportunities for Staff**

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made based on merit and ability and in compliance with the law. As an employer, we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.