



Equality Policy

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1. Introduction

The Equality Duty forms a part of the Equality Act 2010. It replaces the three previous duties on race, disability and gender, bringing them together into a single duty. It also covers:-

- Age (for school staff only)
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment

This policy sets out how the governing body of Heene CE Primary School promote equality of opportunity for members of its community.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies including maintained schools and Academies.

This combined Equality Duty came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:-

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as outlined above i.e:

- Decision makers in schools must be aware of the duty to have 'due regard' when making a decision or taking an action which may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Schools should consider equality before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep it under review on a continuing basis
- The Equality Duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind – it is not just a question of ticking boxes

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:-

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Specific Duties

The Act also introduced specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

The Specific Duties require schools to:-

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty to public equality objectives every four years
- This policy and the equality action plans will be published on the school website

2. Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Heene CE Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and well-being outcomes and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies – who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:-

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

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Overall aims of our Equality Objectives

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, ability and ethnic origins

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, well-being and material outcomes.

Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

3. Mission Statement

At Heene CE Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Heene CE Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

4. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this policy, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this we will:-

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community
- in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

5. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Heene CE Primary School.

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 on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff; Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;

Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all

6. Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation included in the Equality Act (2010).

Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Equality Act (2010).

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:-

- Prepare an Equality Policy which includes our written policy for race equality;
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this policy, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils;
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of disability

The Equality Act (2010) defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The definition of disability was extended by the Disability Discrimination (DDA) Act (2005) as follows:-

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well-recognised”, although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Equality Act (2010) places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:-

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people’s needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:-

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Gender Equality

The Equality Act (2010) places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:-

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act (2010) confirms protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (2010) confirms that discrimination is unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

7. Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We will achieve this by using the following to shape the plan:-

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' events, parent-consultation meetings;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET Days;
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school;
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at governing body meetings

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The role of the headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policy and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.

It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The headteacher ensures that all appointments' panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities. The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy.

All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.

All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.

Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

9. Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as:

'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:-

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;

- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

10. Review of progress and impact

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a structured programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Policy annually and review the entire policy on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

11. Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:-

- Publish our plan on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available

APPENDIX A - PLAN

Ensuring Equality of Opportunity and Participation

The school continues to ensure that:-

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- All staff are aware of the school's Equality Policy;
- The talents of disabled pupils are recognised and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender;
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option); class assemblies; fundraising etc;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies;
- Extended school activities such as breakfast and after-school clubs take into account pupil needs and access issues and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status;
- Staff, pupils, parents and carers continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Policy through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, School Council meetings, parents' evenings etc.

The school continues to provide:-

- Extra and additional support for pupils who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well-being, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment;
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).

Promoting Positive Attitudes and Meeting Needs

The school continues to:-

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the school and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the school and support them in their work and career development, and try to reflect the diversity of the school community in its workforce
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the governing body and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute
- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups
- Supporting disabled pupils in the period of transition between primary and secondary school to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings;

- Helping children and young people to understand others and value diversity
- Promoting shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them
- Developing skills of participation and responsible action – for example through the new ‘Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK’ strand of citizenship education

Eliminating Discrimination and Harassment

The school continues to:-

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person’s race, gender or ethnicity
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour

Monitoring Impact

The school will continue to collect and analyse evidence and data on children’s achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement