



Policy and Procedure: School Equality Policy Statement

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“We aim to nurture the qualities of compassion, understanding and respect for those around them, and for those different from themselves.” Statement of Intent.

Policy

Legal Framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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 guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff and governors. In addition they apply to visitors to Margaret McMillan Primary School.

Definition of Discrimination

Under the law there are different types of discrimination, with differences in the legal framework surrounding them. These are;

Direct discrimination, which occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on the grounds of a personal characteristic.

Discrimination by association, which occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person because their sibling, parent, carer or friends has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination arising from perception, which takes place where an education provider behaves as if the person has the characteristic and treats them worse than others as a result. This applies whether the perception is true or not, even if the education provider knows that the person does not have the protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination, which occurs when a rule or condition which is applied equally to everyone:

- Can be met by a considerably smaller proportion of people from a particular group,
- Is to the advantage of that group,
- Cannot be justified by the aims and importance of the rule or condition.

Discrimination arising from a disability, which occurs when an education provider treats the disabled person unfavourably, this treatment is because of something which has come about as a result of the disabled person's disability and the education provider cannot show that this treatment is justified as a balanced way of achieving something for a good reason.

Harassment, which occurs when unwanted conduct has the purpose or the effect of violating a person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on the grounds of disability, religion, race or sex.

Third Party Harassment of staff, which occurs when an employee is subject to harassment from someone outside of the school and is unacceptable. The school will take action under the complaints policy to ensure that such harassment of its staff is dealt with appropriately. This may include reporting the perpetrators to the police.

Victimisation, which occur when a person is treated less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and 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 gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our 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:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity.

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of 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 boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.
- A sense of belonging and contributing to a shared community.

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

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- Whether or not they are disabled.
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status.
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Whatever their age.

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

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:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men.
- L.G.B.T (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) people and heterosexual.
- Age.

Principle 6: Consultation will ensure representation of key stakeholders

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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. Consultation will be non-discriminatory and will ensure representation of key stakeholders as appropriate.

Principle 7: 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, and greater participation in public life of:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- L.G.B.T people and heterosexual.

Principle 8: We address all prejudice and prejudice related bullying.

We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the legal way of the legal duties listed above.

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs

- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the principles of this policy.

The curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- 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.

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 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.

Phase Leaders have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy. All staff are expected to:

- Ensure they follow the equality policy and take up equality training and learning opportunities provided by the school.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos.
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles above.
- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Reviewing the curriculum plans to ensure there is equality of opportunity to access the curriculum through teaching and learning.
- Recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping in the school and wider community.

- Challenging discriminatory language and behaviours and providing appropriate alternatives and role models.

Visitors are responsible for:

- Behaving in a non-discriminatory way and respecting the human rights of individuals regardless of age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other School policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and review

We collect and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.