



Victoria Park
Primary Academy

Single Equalities Policy

2013

Single Equalities and Cohesion Policy

Legal Duties

The Single Equalities and Cohesion Policy is based on the following legislation:

- The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975)
- The Education and Inspections Act (2006) regarding the promotion of community cohesion
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Race Relations Act (1976)
- The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)
- The Human Rights Act (2000)
- The Children's Act (2004)
- The European Directives
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The respective Codes of Practice associated with the legislation

The above legislation requires schools to have a Race Equality Policy, Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme. **This Single Equalities Policy incorporates all 3 policies** and schemes into a single policy and sets out how the governing body will meet the equality requirements relating to race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

In addition to the Single Equalities Policy, the school will continue to publish a Race Equality policy based on the Commission for Racial Equality's 'Learning for All' framework. There are no specific duties or requirements on schools to publish a scheme relating to religion, beliefs or sexual orientation.

The Single Equalities Policy also aims to show how the school will promote community cohesion.

Statement

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Victoria Park Primary school to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community for our school this means, not simply treating everybody the same but, understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Parents/carers
- Governors
- Multi-agency staff linked to the staff
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Victoria Park equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above we are guided by seven principles.

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners, including adults and children, as being of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender.

Principle 2: We recognise, celebrate and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to 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, women and men are recognised.

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, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

Principle 4: We believe in fair and equal staff recruitment, retention and development

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.

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

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, 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.

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.

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.

Monitoring and Review

Equality is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring and due regard is given promotion of all aspects of equality within the SDP. The person on the staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation is Avnish Dhesi. She will be responsible for:

- Leading discussions, arranging training, keeping staff updated in designated staff meetings which will include support to discuss equalities within the school community
- Working closely with the governing body
- Supporting positively the evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of the policy

Promoting Equality and Cohesion through the Curriculum

Learning and Teaching

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

- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum cover issues of equalities, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion
- Ensure all subject departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different ethnic groups to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all pupil groupings
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and settling challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify resources that support staff development

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

To secure the desired outcomes we recognise that:

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils
- Adults in the school will try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- The school should place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- The school must provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All pupils are to be encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils

Curriculum

We aim to ensure that:

- The curriculum is culturally diverse with a strong international dimension
- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- All steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all pupils, their linguistic needs are taken into account and their learning styles are considered
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community:

- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored
- Although physical access to the school is difficult under normal circumstances, vehicular access to a school door can be easily arranged for disabled visitors
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities

Resources and Materials

When ordering new resources and materials consideration will be made to how they show equality.

The provision of good quality resources and materials within our school is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexual diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society including people with disabilities;
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community consistent with health and safety
- Not include explicitly and implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist materials

Use of Language

We recognise that it is important at Victoria Park that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals e.g. Inuit rather than Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians

Extra-Curricular Provision

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coach drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy.

We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contract with children adhere to these guidelines and are CRB checked.

Provision for Bilingual Pupils

We undertake to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Roma children
- Those from refugee families
- Pupils whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff takes account of disability needs, gender, religious and ethnic differences and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore where appropriate remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include pupil's access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages.

We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All supply staff are made aware of equalities policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. Examples include:

- Unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)
- Unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender)

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to all diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond. We would do this by:

- Encouraging all parents/carers to participate at all levels in the full life of the school
- Setting up as part of the schools commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of members of the school community including pupils, staff, local community members, parents/carers, local faith groups and local disability groups has been developed to support the school with matters related to its equalities duties
- Encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities e.g. school fair, black history month celebrations, Eid celebrations, harvest festival etc
- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities
- Encouraging all families to sign the Home School Agreement

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community
- The school's Equality and Cohesion policy is maintained and updated regularly
- All procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented

The Headteacher and Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality and Cohesion Policy
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Policy

- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of race, disability, or other equality issues
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider

We ensure that the commitments embodied in our mission statement for equality permeate the full range of our policies and practices:

- Equal opportunities
- Pupils' progress attainment and assessment
- Behaviour discipline and exclusions
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and learning
- Induction
- Admissions and attendance
- The curriculum
- Individual subjects
- Resources and equipment
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Governor/staff training and professional development
- Partnerships with parents/carers and communities
- Visits and visitors

The Measurement of Impact of the Policy

Each policy, and any other relevant policies as outlined in the specific duties placed upon us by the relevant legislation, will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. This will be completed as part of the normal cycle of school self evaluation and review.

The school will ensure that an action plan is produced each year that identifies how barriers for achievement will be removed for different groups of learners. Where relevant, reference will be made to the single equalities policy.

The school will ensure that it will conduct an annual audit of community cohesion provision and produce an action plan as part of the single equalities policy.

The school will ensure that an action plan is produced on an annual basis that sets out how the school plans to promote race equality.

A copy of the most recent Single Equalities and Cohesion Action Plan is attached as Appendix A.

Policy first approved by the full governing body on 2nd December 2009 and reviewed thereafter on an annual basis.