



Ashton St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Equality Policy

Ratified in November 2023

Update in November 2024

Introduction

Ashton St. Peter's 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 between people. 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- 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 recognise, 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 that are 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 have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make at least good progress and achieve to their highest potential
- 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.

Purpose of the policy

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 and 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 by April 6th 2012

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 also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Development of the policy

When developing the policy, the Governors took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework 2023, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that Ofsted has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, self evaluation review, school website and newsletters. There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council. The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

What we are doing to eliminate 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-to-day life of the school. We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

As a Church of England school, our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school policies on Behaviour and Exclusions, takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing 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
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation

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 if required.

What we are doing to advance equality of 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 or specific need for example, through our pupil admissions meetings.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data 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 publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

Within the ethnic groups:

White

Mixed

Asian or Asian British

Black or Black British

Chinese

Any other ethnic background

FSM and non-FSM

Ever 6 and Non-Ever 6

EAL

All SEN

SEN EHC Plans

More Able

Looked after Children

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We use a range of teaching strategies and plan differentiated tasks to ensure we meet the needs of all pupils.

We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving and support for more able students.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

We also implement a Disability Equality and Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can access the curriculum and the physical environment.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and across the curriculum.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based on 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 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 and events e.g. Black History Month.

Equality Objectives (see Pupil Premium Action Plan and School Development Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Our Equality Objectives for 2023/24 are

- To ensure that average progress and attainment from the end of KS1 to the end of KS2 in English and Mathematics is in line with national expectations
- To ensure that vulnerable groups of pupils achieve challenging targets and the differences in attainment for these pupils are at least in line with the national average

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

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. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing body

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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy. Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

Headteacher and Senior Leadership team

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. The Headteacher also has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative Christian ethos in their classroom in line with our whole school 'Values Programme'
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver a curriculum that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this. This policy is also available on our school website.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to 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 on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

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.

We 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.

Review Procedures

The School's policy will be reviewed:

- Every year in November
- If the School wishes to review the policy.
- If amendments are required by the LA

Ratified by:

Date: November 2023

Chair of Governors

Other policies to refer to;

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

Special Educational Needs

Anti-Bullying

Inclusion

Data Protection



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Transgender Policy

The principles as outlined in our equality policy apply to transgender pupils.

Practice to support transgender pupils is embedded across school policies and curriculum and builds on best practice already in place to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The needs of the pupil will always be sensitively considered in liaison with the pupil's parents, whilst also considering the needs and sensitivities of other pupils.

The following scenarios will apply, whilst acknowledging the list is not exhaustive.

Physical Education

A young transgender pupil has the same right to Physical education as other pupils. With regard to young transgender pupils at school, there should be reasonably few, if any, issues regarding participation within the sports of their true gender.

Changing Room Facilities

The use of changing room facilities will be carefully considered. Facilities for transgender pupils will be sensitive to their needs and also recognise the needs and sensitivities of other pupils. When competing at another school or outside venue, school staff must ensure there is appropriate sensitive provision available. Ashton St Peter's Primary School will take a view prior to the delivery of those lessons, in discussion with parents and guardians.

Swimming Lessons

A risk assessment of the changing facilities will be completed. There must be careful consideration of the health and safety policy and procedures of the leisure centre or swimming pool. This will include the assessment of appropriate clothing when in the swimming pool.

Toilet Facilities

Transgender pupils will use the unisex toilets which are provided at Ashton St Peter's Primary School.

Residential Trips

The sleeping arrangements will need to be thought about carefully before the trip takes place. Risk assessments will be carried out prior to residential trips so that reasonable adjustments can be made to allow the pupil to participate.

This protocol will be reviewed in conjunction with the Equality Policy

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The Equality Policy and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, and other stakeholders
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties
- The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through collective worship, friends' assembly and the school council
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- The school takes part in annual events such as Black History Month
- The school environment is increasingly accessible possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information