



22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019

Dear parents,

**Equality at Anderton Park**

There is a short video on our website (under 'Important Information', then 'Information for Parents') about equality. Please watch this if you can. If you can't watch, please read below for details of what is said -

As far as we can see, there seem to be two things that are troubling parents - the new SRE policy from the government and LGBT issues.

**1. New SRE**

- Currently, all schools are required to have FRE policy, but they are different for each school.
- In September 2020 The Department for Education is introducing compulsory 'Relationships Education' for primary pupils and 'Relationships and Sex Education' (RSE) for secondary pupils. All schools will follow these same statutory guidelines.
- In primary schools this will be about being kind, sharing, making friends, agreeing to disagree, how to make up after an argument etc.
- In primary there will be nothing to do with sexual or intimate relationships. The word sex has been taken out for primary schools.

**2. LGBT issues**

- Some parents seem to be worried about the LGBT part of Equality Act.
- The Equality Act is legislation that was brought about in 2010.
- It states that people cannot be discriminated against for a number of protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex & sexual orientation).
- It seems some parents are concerned that schools are teaching children 'how to be gay'. This is simply not the case. Children are not being taught how to be gay or straight.
- Children must be educated that there is a law that says gay people are equal to straight people.
- In primary school this means telling children that some people have two mummies or two daddies, and that's ok.
- In schools we are raising awareness that you may know people who are gay or have two mummies or daddies - neighbours, friends, peers etc.
- Religiously or culturally, some people don't think it is ok to be gay. This is also something to be accepted.
- APS is not telling anyone to change their religious beliefs.
- We may say to children "some religions don't think it's ok for people to have two mummies or daddies. This is also ok".
- It is up to parents and families to teach children about their own personal religious beliefs and the beliefs of their family & household.
- This is also ok and the right of parents.
- For example - Christmas. Not everyone celebrates Christmas but in the UK Christmas is celebrated widely. Some people have a Christmas tree, some don't. Even if you do have a Christmas tree, it doesn't mean you're a Christian, you're just part of a Christian festival which for some is also part of being British.
- So just as parents can say to children "we don't have a Christmas tree because we're not Christian" they can also say "We don't think it's ok for two women or two men to get married, but in the UK the law says it is ok".
- We have to promote understanding & foster good relationships between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't - paragraph 149 of the Equality Act states this.
- This is the law for anyone who is a public servant, working in schools, hospitals etc.
- Many of our governors are devout Muslims who you can come and talk to if you would like. You can also talk to the senior leaders here.
- This is a great school. We have a rich curriculum - science, maths, music, PE etc. The issue re LGBT is a very small part of what makes up the school and school life.
- Equality runs through everything we do here. Not just the LGBT part of equality, but all other aspects as well - men & women, disabled people, race, religion etc.

To reiterate -

- We do not teach children how to be gay.
- We do not at our school teach anything about sexual intercourse or sexual relationships of any kind - straight, gay or other.
- You can check our policy on our website. We call it FRE - Family & Relationships Education. This has been the same for quite a few years now and we have not made any changes.
- When the new policy comes out from the government we will look at that and it will also be on our website. This won't be until next year.
- So please do not worry. We are teaching children to be tolerant, to be understanding, to respect people, to understand that gay people are equal to straight people and that this is the case in Britain & British law.
- There is no age limit to this. We can't just teach them that when they're 7, 10 or older. There's no age limit to equality or understanding equality. So we must teach all children this in an age appropriate way.
- We teach children about tolerance and understanding of all the different people in Britain and around the world.

Yours sincerely,

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