

# Hawksmoor School Single Equality Policy and Guidelines

## Introduction

This Equality Policy sets out the school's approach to promoting community cohesion, equality and diversity. It covers disability, gender and race/ethnicity, in response to the statutory duties on schools to publish disability and gender equality schemes and a race equality policy. It also encompasses all other equalities issues and sources of discrimination.

This Equality Policy statement sets out:

- The school's context
- Aims and values
- The school's overall approach to promoting equality: community cohesion, recognising and celebrating diversity and tackling discrimination
- Specific reference to community cohesion, race, disability, gender and religious equality and strategies to promote them
- Roles and responsibilities
- Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

## The School Context

Hawksmoor is a high achieving, all-through, 2 forms of entry, over-subscribed, primary school for boys and girls set in attractive grounds in the heart of Thamesmead, offering high quality education for children from 3 – 11 years old. We welcome children from all religious and cultural backgrounds, those with disabilities and special needs and have been awarded the Inclusion Charter Mark. The school is single storey and the classrooms are accessible for wheelchair users.

We are a highly inclusive school which serves an ethnically diverse community and currently have over 70% of pupils of black and ethnic heritage of which the majority are Black Africans, many of whom are new to the country, with 40% of the school population from Nigeria. Almost two thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language: our children speak 31 different languages. A third of children are IDACI 'hard-pressed' and about a quarter are eligible for free school meals. We have high mobility, especially upper Key Stage 2, with mid-phase admissions arriving directly from abroad or after attending a series of other schools. About half arrive with a complexity of needs including SENs. A high proportion (over a third) have special educational needs, most of them linked to poor language skills including delay in their home language as well as English, leading to literacy difficulties. An increasing number (5%) have ASD and 3% have a statement. While some of our children have medical conditions, we do not have any regular wheelchair users or children with major mobility difficulties. We currently have slightly more girls than boys. Although we have children who follow all the major world religions, most of those with a faith are Christians. We have a very high number of children from over-crowded homes and with single or absent parents. We believe some of our children could be informally fostered and/or trafficked. Some are carers.

Whilst our Black African children are our highest achieving group, our White British children achieve as well as white children nationally. Boys often achieve as well as girls and the gender achievement gap is often narrower than that nationally. Our pupils from IDACI hard-pressed families do relatively well and FSM pupils often better than FSM nationally although they sometimes achieve fewer Level 4s by the end of Key Stage 2 than non-FSM: targeted 'narrowing the gap' projects such as 1:2:1 tuition are successfully reducing the difference.

We have an increasingly diverse staff, especially teachers which are currently a third BME and a fifth male. A smaller proportion of TAs and support staff are BME and only the Premises Manager male despite many attempts to find appropriate male TAs. Our staff speak a range of European, Middle Eastern, Arabic and African languages.

## **Equality – Aims and Values**

At Hawksmoor School we aim to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards. Our Equality Policy is based on the following core values as expressed in the school's aims and mission statement:

### **Core Value:**

#### ***Equal Value, Equal Appreciation***

- appreciating everyone's contribution and valuing all, equally
- celebrating diversity, promoting inclusion
- recognising and playing to strengths, care and consideration

### **Mission Statement**

As a foundation school we espouse the principles of self-determination and opportunity within a caring and morally responsible school community. Within these broad aims we will endeavour to:-

1. Value all pupils and seek to develop each child's abilities and aptitudes to their full potential.
2. Provide a quality education to all irrespective of belief, ethnicity, gender or disability.
3. Educate the whole child by addressing intellectual, moral, emotional, social and physical development.
4. Seek to encourage an understanding of the diversity of culture and belief within the school.
5. Teach children a sense of both rights and duties as members of their community.
6. Value and encourage partnership with parents.
7. Seek to provide all children with educational and recreational activities outside the curriculum - and particularly securing our tradition for music.
8. To foster links within the community, working with local groups to establish positive and mutually beneficial relationships.

### **Our Aims**

We aim to develop the all-round ability of each child in our care, to help them develop the ability to learn and reason, so that each child enjoys his/her school work and finds satisfaction in achieving his/her full potential. The achievement of these aims will be through the National Curriculum and the school's curriculum plan.

- To help pupils use language and numbers effectively
- To help them understand the world in which they live
- To help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed for our developing world
- To enable them to gain study skills and the ability to reason
- To make value judgements and to appreciate and be tolerant of others.

We particularly seek to:

- Provide a culture of respect for others
- Recognise and celebrate differences between people
- Provide a community where pupils are well-prepared for life in a diverse, pluralist society.

## **Our Approach to Promoting Equality**

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Through the Equality Policy, the school seeks to ensure that no member of the school community or any other person through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children and other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, where the person lives or spent convictions (unless they make them unsuitable to work with children under our Safeguarding Policy)

Equality of opportunity at Hawksmoor encompasses and is integral to the whole way the school operates. We place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the school as an individual. We value each child's contribution to the school community, and positively encourage respect for, and understanding of, cultural and social diversities. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances, building on the strengths their experiences bring while removing any barriers to learning resulting from them through our high quality core activities and extended services.

We ensure the very positive, inclusive ethos of the school supports the development of self-respect and self esteem in all pupils, staff and the community it serves. All staff are committed to providing a friendly, caring learning environment in which all children are encouraged to achieve their potential, irrespective of gender, race, social class, language, special needs or religion. Any behaviour on the part of children, parents or staff, which takes away the self-esteem of any individual, is not acceptable to our school. Hawksmoor School is actively opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

The staff of this school believes that all children should have equal access to the curriculum. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and of the need to prepare pupils for life in a pluralist society. We believe that traditional stereotypes which might promote certain groups or cultures as being superior should be challenged through discussion and careful provision of books, posters, other resources and varied role models.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members, and to contractors working on site and any visitors to the school.

## **A Cohesive Community**

Hawksmoor serves a potentially divided community so has a critical role to play in promoting community cohesion by bringing the different parent and community groups together in a constructive way which emphasises commonalities as well as appreciation of differences; and educating our children, the future population of Thamesmead, so they respect and enjoy each other's company making Thamesmead an integrated, harmonious community.

A cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision for all communities, an emphasis on articulating what binds communities together rather than what differences divide them, a sense of belonging, of identifying with the neighbourhood and of 'looking out for each other.
- There is a commitment to equality and social justice.
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated, respected and protected, in order to support integration and cohesion in changing communities.
- People have similar life opportunities, irrespective of background.
- Everyone understands their rights and responsibilities and is encouraged to participate at all levels.
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

**Hawksmoor is committed to meeting the four strategic aims of the national Community Cohesion Standards:**

1. Close any attainment and achievement gaps
  - By ensuring that assessment arrangements enable all pupils to attain at the highest possible and do not put any group of pupils at a substantial disadvantage
  - By ensuring all staff have an equal opportunity for promotion to all levels within the school e.g. by using the LA Equal Opportunities Code for Recruitment and Selection and including a commitment to EO in all adverts, and to the CPD, shadowing and work experiences and opportunities which will help them achieve this. We believe our actions speak louder than any words and that modelling equality of opportunity so we have a diverse staff sends out key messages while providing our pupils with excellent role models.
  - By actively contributing to capacity building within the community e.g. by offering opportunities for our staff drawn from the community to gain qualifications in school
2. Develop common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.
  - By ensuring our curriculum content contributes to an appreciation of cultural diversity, and challenges prejudice, bias and stereotype.
  - By ensuring the mainstream curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about and become involved in the life of their communities.
  - By ensuring our highly effective behaviour policy and procedures are applied objectively and reflect our commitment to developing mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.
  - By ensuring all governors have the knowledge and understanding to provide opportunities to develop common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.
3. Contribute to building good community relations and challenge all types of discrimination and inequality.
  - By ensuring that staff and governors are trained in their responsibilities under relevant legislation.
  - By ensuring that all staff and governors have the knowledge and understanding to promote good community relations and challenge discrimination
  - By ensuring the school takes positive steps to promote good community relations.
  - By ensuring partnership arrangements are conducted in line with the school's equality policies.

4. Remove the barriers to access, participation, progressions, attainment and achievement.
  - By working with the LA Admissions Sections to ensure our admissions criteria fully meet the New Code of Practice and are rigorously applied so our intake reflects our local catchment area and looked after and children with disabilities and special educational needs are given appropriate priority.
  - By minimising the use of exclusion and ensuring the criteria are objectively applied following a detailed investigation so there are no significant differences in exclusion rates between different social or ethnic groups.
  - By maximising all pupils' access to the full curriculum and other activities and keeping disapplication to a minimum, ensuring no one group is over-represented.
  - By ensuring the staff and governor profile represents the diversity of British society and the pupil community we serve.
  - By ensuring all pupils, parents and community members have equal access to any courses and work experience placements run in the school, and to training provision in the local area.

In order to achieve a cohesive community, we are committed to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities.
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community.
- Understand the needs and hopes of all our communities.
- Tackle discrimination.
- Increase life opportunities for all.
- Ensure teaching and the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity.

Our contribution will include:

- **Teaching, learning and curriculum** – teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- **Equity and excellence** – to ensure equal opportunities for all to success at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
- **Engagement and extended services** – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally.

## **Promoting Race, Disability, Gender and Religious Equality**

### **Pupils' attainment and progress**

At Hawksmoor School we expect and achieve the highest possible standards. All staff have high expectations of all pupils and continually challenge them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement, celebrating a wide range of accomplishment including talents and interests developed out of school or as part of their youth culture e.g. through our annual 'Hawksmoor's Got Talent' competition. We monitor and undertake detailed forensic analysis of pupil achievement and participation by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and socio-economic circumstances, and combinations of these and other relevant factors such as EAL. Any disparities which are identified are addressed through targeted and rigorously evaluated initiatives, curriculum planning, teaching and support. All children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning through their individual targets. Any pupil not making expected progress is identified as quickly as possible through frequent pupil progress meetings and immediate,

tailored action taken such as focused individual and group curriculum and teaching targets derived from detailed gap analysis, and targeted, time-limited small group and individual intervention programmes which are regularly impact-evaluated to ensure they are effective in narrowing any gaps.

Summative analysis of attainment and progress data and impact evaluation of targeted narrowing the gap and raising achievement initiatives included in the School Quality Improvement Plan is reported to the governing body so they can monitor and evaluate their effectiveness and ensure all groups of pupils are making best possible progress.

In order to ensure all parents have the opportunity to participate in an informed dialogue about their child's progress and are in a position to effectively support their child's learning, we ensure progress reports to are brief, written in plain English, accessible and appropriate; and offer family literacy and numeracy classes, workshops and briefings for parents new to the country so they understand the approaches we use.

### **Ethos and the Learning and Emotional Environment**

We ensure that we have a clear understanding of the make-up and backgrounds of our school community by ensuring comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs and diet is included on all admission forms; analysing our school population and reporting to governors termly with a commentary on any trends and implications for practice; by briefing staff members about new pupils is a standing item in the weekly briefing; and by providing information and training about particular groups e.g. Nigerian culture, in which we encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference. We actively promote good personal and community relations and recognise diversity as having a positive role to play within the school.

We are committed to providing an inclusive ethos in which we promote positive approaches to difference, fostering respect for, mutual trust and positive relationships between, people from all backgrounds, genders, religions, cultures and abilities, and to property. Staff challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities. Our pastoral support takes account of religious, cultural and ethnic differences, special educational needs, disability and the particular experiences and needs of our pupils e.g. culture shock for those new to the country, and to help those who have been absent a long time re-integrate socially as well as catch up academically. The school provides appropriate, targeted support for these pupils and those learning English as an additional language and all pupils are actively encouraged to improve fluency in, use and be proud of learning a new language and their home and community languages to enhance their learning. We welcome the diversity of languages in our school and we give them all status and value. We look for opportunities to use our languages to enrich the curricular experience of all our pupils and we draw upon the expertise of our school community wherever possible. We recognise the positive role home and first languages have to play in the development of English language learning and in pupil's cognitive development. Pupils who speak languages in addition to English are encouraged to use them in school, and wherever possible and appropriate, we offer bilingual support for pupils who are at the earlier stages of learning English.

Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. We ensure all adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating and reinforcing high expectations of all pupils with regard to behaviour and attendance while operating consistent systems of rewards and discipline; analysing and reporting to governors patterns of incidents, rewards, sanctions (including exclusion which is almost never used, especially if the pupil has special needs) and attendance by ethnicity, disability and SEN,

and gender so they can monitor that our policies and strategies are being equally and objectively applied. Where disparities occur, tailored strategies are put in place to address them e.g. where a particular group of pupils are struggling to maintain appropriate behaviour in the playground, or making adjustments to enable a pupil with medical needs to attend, and additional training and coaching offered to staff – both are impact evaluated. Appropriate adjustments are made to application of our policy for pupils whose special educational needs and traumatic life experiences make it difficult for them to conform. We make plain English information and advice available to parents, including about their rights and responsibilities in relation to attendance and exclusion and are happy to modify this and other information to make it accessible e.g. by translating or enlarging it, or by reading it to or recording it for parents with literacy difficulties. We take positive action to deal with inappropriate, possibly culturally based forms of home discipline, parenting and care, using staff with a similar ethnic, cultural or linguistic background to explain boundaries and explain acceptable alternatives; recommending participation in our excellent parenting programmes.

Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, will not be tolerated. Staff are trained to recognise and deal with all forms of harassment, including racism, sexism and homophobia, which are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with the school's highly effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies. We ensure pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures and we work in partnership with parents and the community to tackle specific incidents of harassment and to develop positive attitudes to difference. Victims of harassment and bullying are given appropriate support using external agencies where appropriate while the perpetrators are dealt with in line with our very clear school policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

### **The Quality of Provision – Teaching and Learning**

All staff will ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued and take positive steps to include any pupil who may otherwise be marginalised. Plans and delivery take account of pupils' experiences and starting points and are responsive to pupils' different abilities and learning styles. Teaching styles include collaborative learning so those children appreciate the value of working together; all children are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks; and pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Staff encourage pupils to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour. All pupils are regularly consulted about their learning and what teaching strategies help them learn best. Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities. They assess the pupils' learning throughout the lesson and adjust their teaching to how well the pupils are doing, creating group and individual opportunities to address misunderstandings and misconceptions. All adults provide objective and supportive feedback and next step coaching in a positive, sensitive, fair and equitable way. All resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they and the displays reflect our inclusive ethos, the experience and background of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotype in all curriculum areas.

Pupil grouping is planned and varied to reflect the requirements of learners and their social development needs. Allocations to teaching groups will be kept under continual review and analysed by ethnicity, gender and SEN. Over-representation of a particular group will be evaluated in relation to the intention to narrow their attainment gap.

Staff will use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress including teacher assessment moderated using APP and nationally standardised tests and assessment tasks,

to ensure that assessment is objective free of gender, cultural and social bias. Where additional assessments are used e.g. for pupils with special educational needs, they will be carefully selected to ensure the materials include images and content that is familiar to and accessible by our pupils. Pupils' work will be regularly scrutinised to ensure it is marked fairly and objectively against the learning intention and pupils' group and individual targets, and to ensure they are not operating and subconscious bias or prejudice. Pupils will be enskilled and encouraged to peer and self-assess against agreed, objective success criteria. Any gaps between teacher assessment and tested levels will be monitored for bias or under-expectation, and care taken that all pupils have equal access to the proposed single level tests. We will ensure all pupils receive their full entitlement to access and special arrangements during SATs tests.

### **The Quality of Provision – Curriculum and Other Activities**

We provide an outstanding broad and balanced curriculum modified to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of our particular pupils and their families e.g. there is a high time and resource commitment to language and literacy development in response to our pupils entering the school with particularly low language level; we organise many visits, visitors and enrichment activities to compensate for many pupils' impoverished early experiences; and we select topics which reflects and values cultural diversity as well as a local, national and global dimension e.g. The Tudors (linked to Greenwich) balanced with The Ancient Kingdom of Benin. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes, builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately so is educationally inclusive and all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum. Our excellent PSHCE curriculum encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture. We are careful to monitor participation by age, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic background and set up specific provision to ensure all groups are catered for e.g. via our Extended Services Cluster.

### **Parents, Governors and Community Partnership.**

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all including reports on their child's progress. The school works in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and issues and to develop positive attitudes to difference. The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community. Parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with a disability, special educational needs or a medical condition; have the purpose of any intervention, programme or action explained to them; their permission sought for outside agencies to work with their child; and are fully informed about and actively encourage to use voluntary agencies, advocacy, and SEN Parent Partnership services who will support them. We monitor parental involvement, participation, attendance at parent's evenings and events, and responses to questionnaires and devise strategies to raise the participation of under-represented groups of parents e.g. dads, and sections of the community. We strive to work closely and in particular with local minority ethnic community organisations. Informal events are designed to include the whole school community and at times will target minority or marginalised groups. We have been successful in encouraging people from minority ethnic communities to become school governors We will ensure that governor support is appropriate for all ethnic groups.

## **Leadership and Management**

The management of the school and the governing body set a clear ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to all its pupils and staff. All staff members are consulted in the decision making process, their skills recognised and valued, and they are encouraged to share their knowledge. All staff, including non-teaching and part time staff are given status and support in our school which is strong on distributed leadership. We aim for the staff group to reflect national and our pupils' ethnic and gender diversity at all levels by ensuring recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equal and encouraging applications from target groups. Our staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community. The induction of new staff addresses issues of equality while staff training and handbooks cover equal opportunities issues. All members of staff have access to high quality INSET and other professional development opportunities such as coaching and responsibility shadowing to enable them to develop their full leadership potential. Not only does the headteacher, an ex-equalities inspector, take overall responsibility for equalities but all members of the Core Leadership Team are responsible for a specific area of equalities work creating very strong leadership across the school. All school policies reflect our strong commitment to equal opportunities. Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and wider community. Additional grants and resources are appropriately targeted and monitored.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

All who work in the school have responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

### **Our governors are responsible for:**

- Making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation – see appendix
- Making sure this policy and procedures are followed

### **The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents know about it.
- Making sure its procedures are followed.
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate actions in cases of harassment and discrimination.

### **All our staff are responsible for:**

- Dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.

### **Visitors and contractors are responsible for:**

Knowing and following our equality policy.

**Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with a the headteacher with each member of the Core Leadership Team responsible for a specific area such as Community Cohesion, SEN and disability etc. and for key contributing factors e.g. the deputy headteacher is responsible for behaviour and monitoring racist, sexist, 'disablist' and homophobic incidents. We have a named governor for equality issues. Responsibilities include:**

- Co-ordinating and monitoring the work on equality issues.
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents).
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. Black and minority ethnic pupils, including Gypsies and Travellers)
- Monitoring exclusions.

### **Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact.**

The impact of this policy and the Single Equalities Scheme and Accessibility Plan stemming from it, will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that we are effective in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessments is used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The school has undertaken a comprehensive self-evaluation audit of equalities work using the Cambridgeshire Evaluation Framework, Ofsted Framework and Guidance to Inspectors. A named member of staff and a named governor responsible for equality will monitor our evaluation, and the progress of actions highlighted in it, annually.

Any areas to be developed have either been addressed or included in the school's Equalities Scheme and Accessibility Plan and actions transferred to our rolling School Quality Improvement Plan, implementation of which is monitored and reported to governors termly, and its impact evaluated by all staff and stakeholders annually.

The governing body and its sub-committees are provided with detailed equalities monitoring information and impact evaluation as part of the termly Head's report and annual presentation of results and data analysis, including progress against targets, to the full Governing Body, and more detailed specific reports to the sub-committees e.g. to Personnel Sub re staffing, recruitment and retention and progression; and on curriculum initiatives, clubs, visits and visitors and special community cohesion events to the Curriculum Sub by a range of staff.

The Governing Body approved this policy on: 20/5/2010

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Annual review 2011 Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Annual review 2012 Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Annual review 2013 Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Annual review 2014 Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2: Summary of schools' statutory duties

The definition is broad and includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). These may all constitute a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- speech, hearing, eyesight
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- perception of risk of physical danger.

People with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement are automatically covered by the definition. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

For children and young people in schools, there is a significant overlap between those who count as disabled under the DDA and those who have special educational needs (SEN), as defined by the Education Act 1996. However, not all disabled children and young people have SEN, e.g. those with asthma, heart problems, cancer etc and not all pupils with SEN have a disability e.g. some children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A disabled child has SEN if they have a disability and need special educational provision to be made for them in order to be able to access the education which is available locally.

There is no statutory requirement for schools to collect and report information on pupils' disabilities. However, it is recommended as good practice to monitor school policies and practices to ensure they are not disadvantaging pupils with disabilities and to monitor pupil progress, attainment, attendance and exclusions for any differential outcomes.

The amended DDA 2005 places a duty on all public authorities, including publicly-funded schools, to promote disability equality. The disability equality duty includes two main elements, a general duty and specific duty.

### The General Duty

The duty requires schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

### Specific Duty

In addition to the general duty, which sets out what schools have to do, schools have to meet a specific duty. This sets out how schools have to meet the general duty and what they need to record as evidence of what they have done.

The main requirements of the specific duty are to:

- prepare and publish a **Disability Equality Scheme** demonstrating how the school intends to fulfil its general and specific duties
- involve disabled people (pupils, staff, parents) in the development of the scheme
- implement the actions in their scheme within three years
- report on their schemes annually
- review and revise their scheme every three years.

## Section 2: Summary of schools' statutory duties

### 2.5 Gender Equality Duty

#### General Duty

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) to place a statutory duty on all public authorities, including schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment (and)
- promote equality of opportunity between females and males.

"Due regard" comprises two linked elements: proportionality and relevance. The weight given to gender equality should therefore be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function.

In terms of unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training, the general duty also applies to people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

For more detailed information on gender equality in employment, see [www.epm.co.uk](http://www.epm.co.uk)

#### Specific duties

To support progress in delivering the general duty, there is also a series of 'specific duties'.

Those specific duties include the following activities:

- To prepare and publish a **Gender Equality Scheme**, showing how the school will meet its general and specific duties including setting out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- To gather and use information on how the school's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services, in particular education functions.

- To consult stakeholders (i.e. pupils, parents, employees, others service users or potential service users, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- To assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

### 2.6 Discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief

Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006 also introduces provisions outlawing **discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief** in education in schools.

The Act sets out that it is unlawful for maintained, independent and special schools to discriminate against a person on the grounds of religion or belief with reference to admissions, exclusions, access and participation.

Specifically, schools will not be allowed to admit or refuse to admit pupils on the basis of their religion or belief and must treat pupils equally irrespective of their own or their parents' religion or belief or lack of it. This also applies to access to benefits, facilities or services. In addition, pupils cannot be excluded from school or subjected to any detriment on the basis of their (or their parents') religion or belief or lack of it.