

Roach Vale Primary School

Equality Scheme

Staffing Elements

1. Introduction

The Governing Body of the school recognises its responsibilities in the employment of staff in the school. In accordance with those responsibilities, it wishes to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all its staff, all those who are applicants to work in the school and those individuals who undertake work on school premises. This policy sets out the principles under which the Governing Body of the school will operate to meet these aims. The policy has been discussed and agreed with all staff representatives and governors. It is available to all staff in the school and to any prospective applicant. The Governing Body welcomes any comments or contributions to the policy document.

2. Statement of Intent

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. This policy focuses specifically on the employment of staff in the school. The Governing Body recognises the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Governing Body and managers of the school will operate at all times within the requirements of antidiscrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in its staffing decisions. All decisions, including advertising of vacancies, shortlisting, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of school requirements. The only personal characteristics, which will be taken into account, will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of the work involved. There will be no generalised concepts or assumptions about the characteristics of groups.

All staff will have a right, through the agreed procedures, to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. Any member of staff who deliberately and knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.

3. Statutory requirements

The Governing Body is bound by law not to discriminate on certain grounds. The Equality Act 2010 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one and sets out the 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection from discrimination as: -

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Governing Body will give sympathetic consideration to requests for time off or for religious observance from staff who are active members of particular religions or beliefs, although such time off will be unpaid and will be considered only subject to the operational requirements of the school.

The Governing Body will wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties created by applicants or members of staff who have a disability.

The Governing Body acknowledges these areas of regulation and confirms its commitment to enforce these statutory requirements in the school. The over-riding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all governors and staff in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

4. Advertising of vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are exceptional reasons why this should not occur, for example in situations of potential redundancy.

5. Selection for appointment or promotion

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- a detailed role profile will be drawn up which accurately describes the duties of the post
- an objective and sufficiently detailed person specification will be defined from the role profile
- from these documents a list of objectively assessed selection criteria will be drawn up
- role profiles, person specifications and selection criteria will be available to all candidates
- shortlisting will be carried out against the selection criteria and a written record retained of the assessment of each candidate
- interview panel members will endeavour to be trained in selection techniques
- at least one person on each panel will be trained in equality and the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation
- selection decisions will be made against the agreed criteria and no other criteria will be used
- a written record of the selection decision relating to the agreed criteria will be retained
- reasonable adjustments will be made to the recruitment and selection process where necessary to ensure that people with disabilities are enabled to compete for appointments in the school

6. Specific Issues

Age

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on age.

Disability

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions of their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in the school. Where a candidate who has a disability is appointed to a post in the school, reasonable provision will be made for adjustments to the working conditions or environment where this is practicable.

Gender reassignment

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination as a result of a person proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex

Marital status or civil partnership

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against employees who are married or in a civil partnership.

Pregnancy and maternity

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave

Race

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin. There may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where an occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of someone of one particular race or ethnic origin. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional, and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

Religion or Belief

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on religion or belief.

Sex

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on gender. There may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where a genuine and determining occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of someone of a particular sex. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional, and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

Sexual Orientation

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation.

Harassment or bullying

The Governing Body is opposed to any unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The Governing Body is further opposed to any act of victimisation, harassment or bullying against any member of staff either by an employee or third party based on assumptions about their status in the above categories or any other grounds. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the school's procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

Non-statutory aspects

Although there is no statutory requirement not to discriminate against other groups, or characteristics of staff, the Governing Body wishes to state that it will not in any way discriminate against members of staff or applicants for posts on the grounds of their political affiliation.

7. Positive Action

The Governing Body recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the school. The Governing Body will therefore give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy. This is action designed to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups.

The Governing Body will not discriminate in favour of individuals from specific groups (positive discrimination), but it will take positive action which enables members of those groups to compete on an equal basis. Positive action measures may include:

- encouraging applications from specific groups which are under-represented in the school
- encouraging people with disabilities to apply for posts
- advertisements which encourage applications from individuals of a particular sexual orientation, or religion or belief, but make it clear that selection will be on merit
- flexible working – promoting the use of job shares and flexible working where operational factors make this possible
- language/literacy training
- supporting training measure for under-represented groups
- assistance with applications for candidates with language problems
- provision of childcare facilities or support with the costs of childcare facilities for staff exploring the possibility of career breaks for women to assist with family commitments
- commitments to interviewing disabled people who meet the basic criteria for the post
- encouraging staff to become representatives of trade unions/associations

8. Harassment and grievance procedures

Harassment has the effect of destroying dignity and undermining the confidence of employees. It can take many forms including physical contact, bullying, threatening or ignoring someone. It can be a series of offensive remarks or a single incident. It can be behaviour that staff find offensive even if not directed at them or harassment because of perception or association.

The Governing Body is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all its staff in the school. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues. The Governing Body will consider any acts of harassment including those on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status and civil

partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, as totally unacceptable and outside the ethos and culture of the school. Any such act by a member of staff against any adult or child will be treated as a disciplinary offence, and action taken accordingly.

The school has procedures to resolve grievances and for the handling of complaints of harassment and bullying at work. The Governing Body is committed to investigate any such complaint. These procedures will be followed carefully and promptly in response to any such complaint. The first point of contact for any such complaint should be the Head Teacher or if the complaint refers to the Head Teacher then the Chair of Governors. In addition, staff have the right to approach their professional association or trade union representative for support.

9. Monitoring the Policy

An Equality policy can only be shown to be effective if its implementation is properly monitored. Given the scope of our policy, this means monitoring both the existing staff of the school and all applications from outside of the school. The school will therefore keep records of existing staff and new applicants which can be analysed to provide data to assess whether this policy is working in practice.

The Governing Body will regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy by the following methods:

- All applicants for posts will be invited to indicate whether they have any special requirements or require reasonable adjustments to enable them to submit an application, attend an interview or carry out the duties of that post. Responses to this question and appropriate actions taken by the school to accommodate people with disabilities will also be monitored as part of this process.
- Information arising from this data collection process will be published on an annual basis and will be available to all staff and governors.
- Staff and governors will be invited to give feedback from time to time, and to make suggestions for improvements.
- The incidence of complaints under the above procedures and any other aspect of this policy will also be monitored, and figures published on a regular basis.
- The Governing Body will ensure that information is stored in an appropriate and confidential format in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

10. Non-employment aspects of equality

This policy relates only to the employment aspects of the activities of the school. The principles outlined here by the Governing Body of fair and equal treatment apply equally to our approach to pupils and parents of the school and to our dealings with members of the local community and all outside agencies. The school's policy on equality in the curriculum and the treatment of pupils is set out in section 9 at the end of this document.

11. Training

The principles outlined above in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Requests for training will be considered in accordance with the school's operational priorities, based on the school's overall development plan and budget allocations.

Similarly, the training of the school managers and governors in issues of equality and discrimination is an essential part of our Equality policy. Where training is scheduled to take place on site, the school will, where possible, adapt the methods of training delivery if current arrangements disadvantage particular individuals or groups of staff.

School Context

Essex is a large and diverse county with 1.7 million residents that make up a quarter of the population of the East of England. There is a mix of urban and rural areas but the majority of newcomers to the county choosing to live in rural areas. The Essex Trends 2011 document shows that just over 10% of Essex residents are from Black or Minority Ethnic Groups. 3.5% of the population class themselves as White Minority Ethnic Groups.

Roach Vale Primary School context:

- 89% pupils come from outside the catchment area

- 33% entitled to free school meals
- 13% pupils from multi ethnic groups
- 8% have a language other than English as their first language

Involvement of staff, pupils, and parents

a) Developing our Scheme

The involvement of a diverse group of people has been instrumental in shaping our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We have strived to involve the full diversity of our school and community, recognising that people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief are best placed to identify key issues for us to address. In developing our Scheme, we have involved staff, pupils and parents in the following ways: -

- Questionnaire and survey to enable us to understand our catchment and community re community cohesion.
- Parent Forum
- Pupil and parent surveys.

b) Ongoing involvement

We have strategies in place to promote the participation of pupils in decision-making and in making a positive contribution to school life. We will embed equality and inclusion into these strategies so that learners from diverse backgrounds are involved in shaping provision and improving practice.

We ensure that outcomes from these involvement activities are acted upon by the school's senior leadership team.

At Roach Vale we:

Involve all children views through a school council meeting on a monthly basis. Governors visit the school regularly and fill in a visit report that is circulated to all governors

Hard to reach families are offered individual home or off site visits through our Parent Support Adviser.

Information gathering

We will collect a broad range of qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our policies and practice and to demonstrate our progress in equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our single equality approach helps us to more effectively monitor our progress and performance, as our pupils and staff may face more than one barrier to achieving their full potential.

a) Pupils

We gather, **disaggregated by gender, race and disability**. For example,

- admissions
- attendance
- achievement and progression
- rewards and sanctions
- the views of the school council
- participation in the school council
- take up of extended school provision and extracurricular activities
- other equality information for example complaints and incidents of race discrimination or bullying

Our termly Pupil Progress Meetings identify children at risk in every Year group across the following groups:

- Gender
- Ethnicity other than English
- SEN
- Able & more able

We gather information to promote equality by:

- Attendance is closely monitored for those at risk, parents and EWO involved.
- The Senior Leadership Team identify with staff the vulnerable and fragile learners and families and the SENCO and Headteacher discuss with parents to possibility of using outside agencies through the use of the CAF form and Parent Support Adviser.

b) Staff

We collect the following information:-

- Staff exit surveys
- Outcomes of performance management reviews
- Disability reviews
- Staff opinion

Priorities are identified from the results and shared with the Governors which ensures robust monitoring takes place annually

Specific Equality Areas

This section of our scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality, and further action that we intend to take

a) Race Equality

What we have already achieved:

Equality of achievement by ensuring that all children attain their potential. All children feel safe from racial harassment and bullying.

Reduce equality gaps in achievement for learners by combating underachievement.

We want to do more by:

- Involving our hard to reach families in the life of the school community.
- Promote a deeper understanding of our children and communicating in the realities of a multi-cultural Britain.
- Promote and model respect for those of different backgrounds, faiths or cultures.

b) Community Cohesion

What we have already achieved:

Surveys of parents have informed our decisions and the recent curriculum changes will ensure that children will have the opportunity to widen their perceptions of the richness of British life today.

- The school has collected for the Colchester Foodbank through the Harvest Festival
- The school regularly collects for local and national charities through collections, charity days and fun days

c) Disability Equality

What we have already achieved:

Developing actions to eliminate bullying and harassment, and any mentoring programmes. We will want to consider all six elements of the general duty, namely:

1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. eliminate disability- related harassment
4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. take steps to take account of disabled peoples" disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

d) Gender Equality

What we have already achieved:

We take account of gender equality when analysing data across the school and note any particular strengths and weaknesses in year groups. Discussions are then had between Senior Leaders and the class teacher to identify strategies to try and reduce the inequality. Good practice is shared between teachers.

We want to do more by:

- Promoting further gender equality to ensure boys and girls make equal progress
- Reduce the gap between our SEN children and the rest of the cohort

e) Other Equality Areas

What we have already achieved:

- Deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation issues and questions made explicit within our anti-bullying policy that homophobic or faith bullying and harassment will not be tolerated
- Provided specific training to support staff to implement this policy.

We want to do more by:

- Providing further access for learners to after school and out of school services through effective sign posting and usage of our LDG.

Impact Assessment

We will carry out equality impact assessments on our policy and practice which will cover all aspects of equality: race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We will look for ways to improve practice as well as ways to eliminate discrimination and harassment. We have a programme of carrying out impact assessments on our existing policies and practice and we will build the impact assessment process into all new policy development and decision making activities.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

- We provide a weekly newsletter to parents informing them of school and pupil related news
- We will seek to involve community views in our decision making.

Putting the Scheme into practice

Publishing the Scheme, raising awareness

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

- Placing it on our website
- Making it available on request
- Providing a summary in our prospectus, including our vision and Key priorities

Monitoring & Evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Action plan

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We will report annually on our progress and performance. Our annual report will be shared with Governors. A summary will be provided for parents and published in our prospectus. Both will explain how the full report can be obtained. We will inform staff and learners of our progress.

The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Equality Action Plan and inform subsequent Single Equality Schemes.

We want this Scheme to be a 'whole organisational' document that drives forward equality and achieves improved outcomes. We will therefore ensure that the Equality Action Plan is an integral part of our School Improvement Plan, and as such, our progress will have regular oversight by the senior leadership team and the governing body. We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan every three years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will again involve staff, learners, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of the school community.

Links with other school policies

School policies that link with, and have informed this Scheme include:

- Inclusion
- SEN
- Admissions

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, learners and parents.
- Ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation.
- Receive and discuss regular equality reports on progress and performance.
- Monitor achievement of equality targets.
- Check that implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan achieves improved
- outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

The Head Teacher will:

- Provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- Ensure staff, pupils, parents /carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Scheme and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this Scheme
- Monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and Action plan
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this Scheme

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Drive forward implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- Support staff to carry out their role in implementing this Scheme
- Provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- Ensure the Scheme is successfully promoted
- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimization.

All staff will:

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to
- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and report these

- Highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities.

All staff will also ensure that students are encouraged to

Recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to:

- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

Promoting Equality: Curriculum

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

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour and language;
- The use of non-stereotyped materials which reflect accurately a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.