

Patcham Infant School

Single Equalities Policy



1. Introduction

This Single Equality policy for Patcham Infant School brings together policies and action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, including all of the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to devalue any individuals within our community. We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and health and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We recognise our responsibilities to our pupils but also their families, our staff, governors, the community and all users of our school facilities.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- Foster good relations between groups and to promote community cohesion
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children.

Please see the following related policies for further information:

Disability Equality Scheme

Behaviour

Anti-Bullying

Child Protection

PHSE

SEN
Provision Mapping
Pupil Premium
Pay

The school context and the community it serves

As a school we are committed to having knowledge of our school community and frequently analyse data which provides evidence of the backgrounds of the members of our school community and the attainment and wellbeing of our pupils and groups of pupils. We use this data to plan improvements that will benefit our school community.

Patcham Infants is a popular school that remains full or almost full year on year. There are currently 319 pupils on roll with a capacity of 320, including 50 part-time places in the Nursery and 90 places in each of the three infant year groups. Pupils are drawn from relatively advantaged backgrounds the majority of whom live in the local community. Just under 4% of pupils are entitled to Free School Meals; 7.5% of pupils come from ethnic groups other than white British; and, just over 2% of pupils have English as an additional language with 9 different languages spoken across the school community. Just under 52% of pupils are boys with just over 48% being girls. 12% of our pupils have medical needs; 15% of pupils have Special Educational Needs; 25% of our pupils have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act: and, there are 39% of our pupils on the Vulnerable Pupils Register.

There are several parents of pupils who have significant disabilities and their needs must be considered. Please see 'Patcham Infant School Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan' for further information on how the school ensures that we are adhering to the statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Patcham Infant school has strong links with the Junior School where almost all pupils will go on to attend and many families have children at both schools.

Our Vision Statement:

At Patcham Infant School we believe that education should be exciting, fun, creative and accessible to all our children. We provide a broad rich curriculum, which is motivating and responsive to the children's interests and needs. The atmosphere that we strive to create will inspire the children with the confidence to take risks within a calm, safe, learning environment. The education that we provide will nurture confident, caring, healthy and happy citizens of the future who have a respect for each other, the community, themselves and their environment.

Our Aims:

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities. We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have seek to involve the whole school community in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We aim:

- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

These aims are addressed in our Equalities Action Plan.

We recognise that it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil, prospective pupil or a member of staff by treating them less favourably if they have **protected characteristics**:

- age (staff only),
- sex,

- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity

For some of our young pupils, a **protected characteristic** may be experienced by association (that a family member is gay or an older sibling is pregnant, for example). We understand that with young children this will include considering sexual orientation with the view that some of our pupils will have lesbian / gay parents and carers and some will grow up to be lesbian or gay. In some cases even very young children have an awareness of their emerging sexual orientation. Therefore we want to ensure that homophobic bullying and name-calling is challenged, family diversity acknowledged and that children are not made to feel uncomfortable if they do not conform to a gender stereotype.

We are committed to ensuring that our school:

- ✓ has a culture of respect for others
- ✓ recognises, values and celebrates similarities and differences between people
- ✓ is a community where pupils are well prepared for life in a diverse society
- ✓ identifies and removes any known barriers to learning and access so that everyone can achieve their very best

2. Our approach to promoting equality.

As well as the specific equalities objectives that we are working on (please see our Equalities Action Plan) the school takes a whole school approach to equalities and community cohesion. We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. We actively seek out opportunities in and outside of the curriculum to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality

- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Teaching and Learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by the protected characteristics (where possible) and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of the protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own identity and culture and celebrate the diversity within our school community, the local context and wider;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;

- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils?

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils/students and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

3. Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant (unless specific requirements are intrinsic to the role).

We will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Human Resources offer a detailed package of Policies offering advice and guidance on equalities matters relating to staff.

As from September 2012 all staff will undertake training to help them understand their equality duties and the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.

4. The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents and carers, pupils and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- In partnership with governors deal with breaches of this policy

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP

Our pupils will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability

- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- model good practice by recognising and challenging prejudice and stereotyping
- promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class.
- respond to and report any equalities related bullying and incidents in line with school policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

5. Responding to Harassment, Victimization and Bullying

Definitions

We recognise that hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, transphobia, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We define bullying in the following way:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

(Preventing and Tackling Bullying

Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2011)

We define 'Prejudice related / hate incidents' in the following way:

This is a one-off incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's race or perceived race, gender disability, religion and / or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity. These can also include indirect prejudice driven behaviour that is not targeted at one individual. The impact of this expression of prejudice against an equality group can be damaging and must therefore be responded to as a prejudice related or hate incident.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore and understand the complexities of equalities issues. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children and the school community. In the case of serious incidents we will support the victim and their family to complete the Brighton & Hove Hate Incident Form and if a crime has been committed inform and involve the police. The Hate Incident Form can be downloaded from:

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1228574>

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender or gender identity;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability gender identity or sexual orientation.

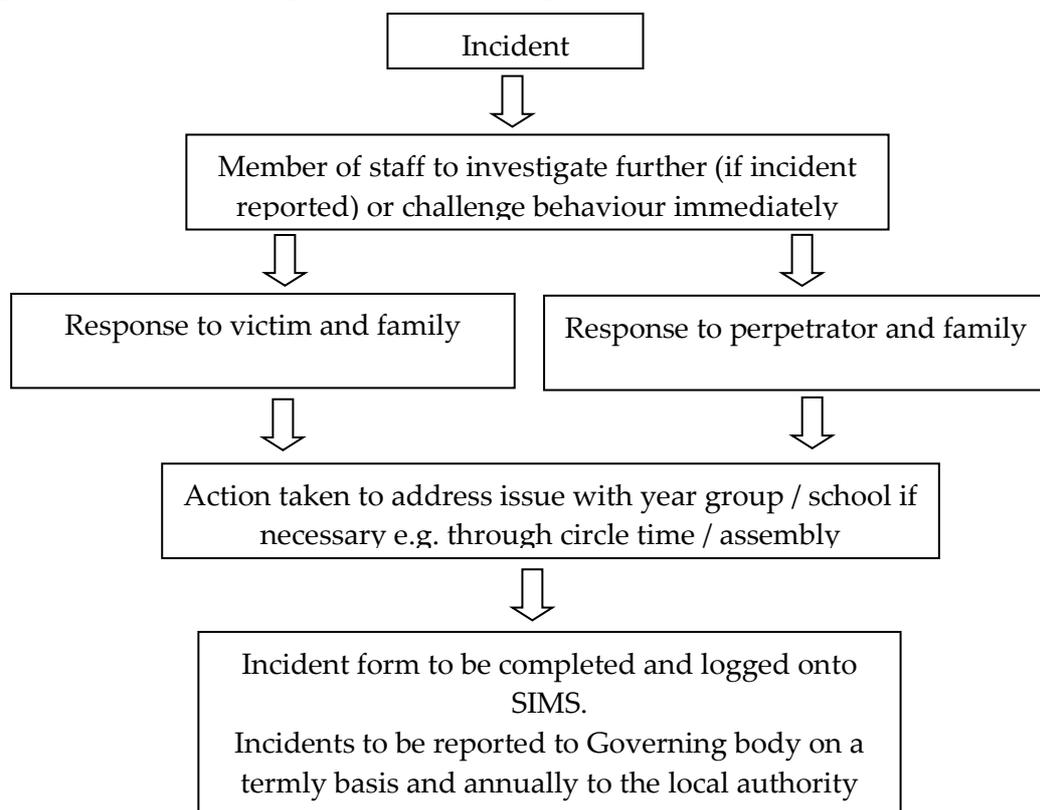
Reporting, Recording and Responding to Prejudiced Based Bullying and Incidents

Prejudiced comments and/or incidents will be addressed immediately (even if it is perceived that there is no victim). Staff members will report the incident to the relevant class teacher who will also inform a member of the Senior

Management Team if necessary. All incidents will be described on an incident report form which is then given to the school secretary in order that the details can be logged onto the SIMS programme (SIMS provides a tool for schools and local authorities to monitor the number and type of incidents which take place in every school).

When necessary the class teacher and/or the Headteacher will meet with the victim and family, as well as the perpetrator and family, in order to: investigate further, challenge the behaviour, support all those involved and make clear that prejudiced behaviours of any kind will not be tolerated. Action will then be taken in school to address the issue further such as classes involved in circle-time discussions, Assemblies and role-play activities.

A procedure for responding and reporting incidents is outlined below.



Please see our Anti-Bullying Policy for further information.

6. Commissioned Services (Buying in Services)

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

7. Involving the School Community in the Development of our Equalities Practice

The development of this policy and of our equalities objectives involves the whole school community. We endeavour to involve and listen to a wide range of individuals and groups in the following ways:

Disability Equality survey

School Council activities

Equalities Working Party

Safe and Well at School Survey

Exit Survey

Pupil Interviews

Hands on practical communication (supporting EAL parents) such as: Year group Discovery Evenings, Phonics talk, Maths talk

Coffee Morning for EAL parents as from September 2012

We recognize the benefits of establishing good links with the local and wider community and we welcome them into our school. From them, we can learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school. By listening to those within our community

and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

We are committed to providing an extended school to support working parents, enrich the curriculum and promote community cohesion. Our provision includes:

- On-site Breakfast Club provision from 8am to 8.45am
- A range of extra-curricular clubs run by our staff including the following activities: Cookery, Science, Sports, Dance, Yoga, Samba, Gardening.
- Family Learning Workshops
- Child minders network meeting

Significant partnerships with other agencies include:

- Local secondary school sports development officer
- Local infant schools cluster including joint INSET
- Shared school counselor
- Brighton Universities trainee teachers
- Local secondary schools and colleges work experience placements
- Child Minders Network
- Links with the local church
- Links with the local care home
- Links with businesses such as 'The Book Nook'

8. How we Identify our Equalities Objectives

In line with our statutory duties we publish annually equalities information and publish and report on equalities objectives. We have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These objectives are published on the school website. Our objectives are decided upon by selecting priorities based on the following sources of evidence:

Consultations and communications listed above

Brighton and Hove Data Package

RAISE online data

SIMS incident reporting data

Equalities Impact Assessments

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us less formally from pupils, parents, staff and the local community.

In Brighton and Hove there are a range of services which support the equality agenda and help us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action, such as: Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Healthy Schools Team, AMAZE.

9. Implementation, Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy was published on our school website on 6th April 2012. It will be actively promoted and disseminated.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.