

FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Aiming for Happiness and High Standards



Equality Policy

Mission Statement

*At Fairfield Community Primary School, we aim to provide a safe, secure environment which will promote **Happiness and High standards**.*

We aim to meet the needs and celebrate the achievements of all pupils, who, through high expectations and high standards of teaching will reach their own potential regardless of ability.

We offer equal opportunities to all in the belief that Fairfield children will take their places as productive, valued and tolerant members of society.

RATIONAL

The requirements of the Equality Act have been introduced incrementally since October 2010. In April 2011, the general public sector duty came into force and in April 2012 schools had the specific duty to publish information and the specific duty to publish objectives.

The primary purpose of the legislation is to bring together existing equalities legislation. Primarily these are the Equal Pay Act of 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act of 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments of recent years protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. It also builds on the 2006 Equality Act which instigated the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The 2010 Act imposes equality duties in respect of each of the equality strands (now called protected characteristics).

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Public authorities are also required to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

The Equality Act has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality. It brings all existing provision broadly into line with one another and extends beyond race, gender and disability to now include the characteristics of age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. The Act also identifies other characteristics such as marital status, pregnancy, having caring responsibilities or maternity. The definition of equality is therefore wider than it has been before. Additionally, requirements that in the past have been seen as good practice are now legally enforceable. For example, the law now requires that as part of their procurement processes, public bodies should prefer companies that it contracts with to have a positive record on equality matters.

There are also implications for the community cohesion agenda. The existing duty to promote good race relations has been replaced with a generic one to promote good relations. The Equality Act will require all public authorities to take the aspects of interaction, empowerment, personal security and attitudes to others into account. Community cohesion is in sympathy with most, if not all of the requirements in the legislation and thus there should not be a radical departure in terms of delivery.

The schools' provision of the act prohibits schools from discriminating against, harassing or victimising:

- Prospective pupils
- Pupils at school
- In some limited circumstances, former pupils

Note: Age and being married or in a civil partnership are not protected characteristics for the schools' provision.

Schools also have obligations under the Equality Act as employers, bodies which carry out public functions and service providers. In this instance all protected characteristics need to be taken into account.

All schools, irrespective of how they are funded or managed, have obligations under the Equality Act 2010. It is the responsible body for a school that is liable for any breaches of the Equality Act.

In the past there have been exceptions to the discrimination provision for schools and these are all replicated in the new act - such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship, and admissions to single sex schools and schools of a religious character.

Schools are obliged to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This duty establishes, in the section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, that public authorities are required to pay 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Equality Act; and
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are known as the three aims or arms of the '**General Equality Duty**'.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourable than others.

The PSED is supported by specific duties.

The **specific duties** regulations require public bodies to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

The purpose of the specific duties is to support compliance with the general duty to have 'due regard'.

The Equalities policy will work in conjunction with all school policies but most specifically:

- Behaviour Policy
- PSHE
- RE - SEND Policy

The following management policies would also be covered:

- Pay Policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
- Absence Policy

This does not replace the Accessibility Plan which schools are still required to produce.

ASPECTS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of Fairfield Community Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Fairfield Community Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised areas of discrimination.

All pupils, staff, governors and other members of our school community strive to put seven key words at the centre of what they do.

VALUED - our children are valued for who they are, the contributions they make, and the effort they put in; for their successes and for the times they try their best and don't achieve. The work and dedication of staff and governors is valued as being instrumental to the success of our school, and the support of parents is valued as essential partners in the children's learning.

SAFE - everyone at Fairfield strives to ensure that the safety of our children is guaranteed. Everyone has a part to play in ensuring that our children are physically and emotionally safe and this includes the children themselves, who should be encouraged to consider the consequence of their choices upon the safety of others.

NURTURING—it is the role of staff, governors and parents to ensure that our children are nurtured and developed; through challenge, appropriate support, encouragement, and through being given opportunities to try new things. Teach staff

have the responsibility to ensure that their words and actions towards the children are positive, encouraging and nurturing; and the children themselves have the responsibility to ensure that their interactions with each other are also nurturing.

RESPECT - at Fairfield, everyone is treated with respect; children, staff, governors, parents and visitors. The views, opinions, beliefs and endeavours of all members of our school community are held in equal esteem.

FRIENDLY - through ensuring that everyone is valued, having regard to ensure that everyone feels safe, by being nurturing towards our children, and by treating everyone with due respect, we maintain our reputation as a friendly school. We teach our children that everyone should be treated in a friendly manner, regardless of whether they are friends.

INSPIRATIONAL - it is the goal of all staff at Fairfield to ensure that the learning opportunities provided for the children inspire them, and create within them the desire to continue to explore learning themes on their own, develop the desire and skills to become an independent learner, and drive to challenge themselves to be the very best person they can be.

ENJOYMENT - it is the belief of the staff and governors of Fairfield that learning should be enjoyable. This is attained through providing stimulating and inspiration learning activities, and through encouraging the children to draw satisfaction and enjoyment from achieving personal goals.

TOLERANCE - it is our belief that we recognise that we may have different opinions, cultures, or beliefs but that we can tolerate each other in an atmosphere of respect. We will listen to each other and take into account other people's feelings.

To help achieve the above goals of our Ethos, the children follow these rules:

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Do as adults within school tell you
- Always work to the best of your ability
- Listen to teacher and other children while they are speaking
- Move around the school quietly and sensibly
- Call children by their first name
- Come to school in uniform and always try to be clean and smart
- Be proud of your school. Treat each other, visitors and the building with respect

This policy will be reviewed by the Governors Executive Sub Committee on an annual basis (September) and will be reviewed by SENCOs within School. It will come under the brief of the Equalities Governor.

There is the possibility of a Local Authority Compliance Officer being appointed. We would submit the policy to such an officer as and when such an appointment is made.

(Review September 2018)