



# Equality Policy

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## Equality Policy

### 1 Introduction and context

#### 1.1 Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Patcham Junior School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes **all the protected characteristics** covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's 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.

Related policies:  
Sex and relationship education policy  
Safeguarding policy  
Anti-bullying policy  
  
Equality action plan  
Healthy school planning

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

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 and young people.

#### 1.2 Our school within the wider context

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.

Our most up to date contextual data can be seen on our website in our Equalities section.

### 1.3 Our vision statement about equality

At Patcham Junior School it is our vision to create an environment where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential. We believe in educating the 'whole child' through an holistic approach where our pupils have a wealth of opportunities to develop their moral, spiritual, creative and intellectual potential. We believe this should be developed through a culture of mutual respect and responsibility for self, others and our environment. We aim to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage everyone to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. We believe that our children are all individuals and every pupil has a pathway to success. We aim to build on the education and skills they have learnt and received at infant school, and enable them to flourish and develop as people in readiness to move on to secondary school.

**Patcham Junior School** seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequalities, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same. We believe we all have equal rights, but may have different needs.

### 1.4 Overall aims of our Equality Policy

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, sexual orientations, 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.

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 infants and primary schools this will include considering sexual orientation with the view that some of their 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, primary school will want to ensure homophobic bullying and name-calling is challenged, family diversity acknowledged and that children are not picked on if they do not conform to a gender stereotype.

\*\*It is not uncommon for primary age children to present with issues related to the gender identity and there are children within primary and secondary schools who identify with a gender different to their biological sex. In addition children can be transphobically bullied because they have transgender family members.

We have produced an access plan in which addresses our statutory duties to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

The access planning forms a core part of our equalities action planning – see the link in our equalities section on our website.

## **2 Our approach**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The school takes a whole school approach to equality, community cohesion and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 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

## **2.2 Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. We also aim to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 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.

## **2.3 Support for pupils / students**

### **2.3a Auxiliary Aids**

We have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and this includes a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. We will also consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally as it is likely to anticipate for pupils in the future.

## **2.3b Pastoral Support**

Pupils are supported in a number of ways in school:

They have access to a school councillor.

We maintain a vulnerable pupils register, which includes children who:

Have persistent absence

Have Free School Meals

Are Looked After Children

Have emotional or behavioural difficulties

Have medical problems

Have a family CAF

Are on a child protection plan, or where there is social service involvement

Other reasons at the discretion of the school.

We take a lead professional role on a family CAF, where we feel it is appropriate and in the interests of the child.

## **2.4 Admissions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on any of the protected characteristics. This is set out in our Admissions Policy.

## **2.5 Exclusions**

Exclusion will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

## **2.6 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.

## **2.7 Hiring out our premises**

Our Equality Policy includes governors, and members of the public who use and find themselves on school premises as part of the business of the school.

If our premises are used by other organisations to run activities or provide services which are not connected with the school, then we are not responsible for the activities or services provided. However, we will do our best to ensure through our lettings policy that groups contravening the school / college values and Equality policy will not be permitted to hire rooms or use our grounds.

### 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) until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. (See the *Safer Recruitment Toolkit* for further guidance.)

We will ensure the safety and well-being 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; and will make reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantage and we will work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

For example, we have installed lift access to the first floor classrooms to aid any member of the school community with access difficulties.

Via the Human Resources service purchased from our HR Provider (BHCC) we have access to advice and guidance on equality matters relating to staff through the intranet, bulletins and advice given by HR professionals. Relevant policies are listed below:

- Safer Recruitment Toolkit (includes equalities in employment issues in schools)  
<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools/HR/Pages/SaferRecruitmentToolkitISAVBSInformation.aspx>
- Schools Absence Management Procedure & Guidance ( includes Fact sheets on Absence & Disability and Access to work; Q&As for Managers on Mental Health; Reasonable Adjustment Guidance for Headteachers)  
<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools/HR/Pages/AbsenceManagementandOccupationalHealth.aspx>
- Whistleblowing Policy (and other key employment policies)  
<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools/HR/Pages/HRSignpostingforHeadteachers.aspx>
- Wellbeing Framework (includes guidance on Work-Life Balance, Dignity & Respect at Work)

and Violence at Work/Incidence reporting)

<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools/HealthSafety/Pages/WellbeingatWork.aspx>

Access to general information on impact on staff of the Equality Act (including the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Disabled Applicants)

<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/supportingyou/HR/ManagingTeams/Recruitmentandinduction/Pages/Equalitiesanddiversity.aspx>

Access to main council equality advice through the Wave Intranet –

<https://wave4schools.brighton-hove.gov.uk/supportingyou/Equalities/Pages/default.aspx>

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.

We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

We annually audit staff training needs and ensure that staff are kept up to date with their equality duties through INSET and staff meetings.

Recent training included “Understanding the Equality Act 2010” attended by the headteacher.

#### **4 The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students 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/students 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 equality related bullying and incidents in line with school policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy
- Be encouraged to support the Policy

- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy

## **5 Responding to harassment, victimisation and bullying**

For incidents involving staff please refer to BHCC dignity at work policy, which we fully subscribe to.

### **5.1 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.

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 social media or the internet). It can involve verbal taunts, name calling, physical injury, and damage to property, rumour spreading, shunning or ridicule and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of ethnicity, religion, belief, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or disability, or because a child is in care, has caring responsibilities or mental health issues. It might be motivated by actual differences, perceived differences or as a result of association with someone else.

Adapted from; *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, prejudice or ignorance, based on a person's perceived or actual ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity or their association with someone from one of these groups. 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 whether intentional or not can be damaging and must therefore be responded to as a prejudice related incident. In some settings prejudice-based incidents are referred to as Hate Incidents.

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 equality 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.

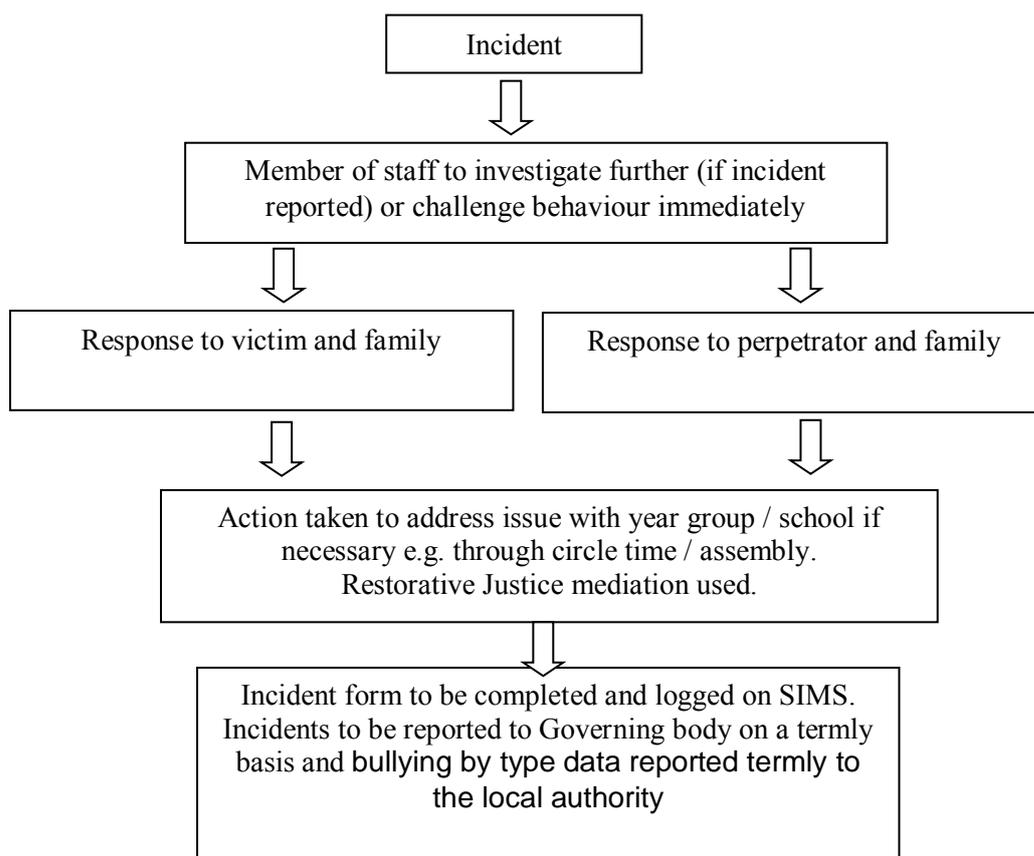
We will record hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities. In the case of serious incidents we will support the victim and their family to complete the Brighton & Hove Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Form and if appropriate inform and involve the police. The Brighton & Hove Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Form can be completed online at:

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1251335>

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, religion or belief;
- 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, religion or belief;
- 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, religion or belief.

## **5.2 Reporting, recording and responding to prejudice based bullying and incidents**



## 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 Equality practice

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

- Our pupils/students

We access pupil's view through questionnaires, the SEAL curriculum and the school council.

- Our staff

Staff feedback is invited through email consultation.

- Our school governors

Governors contribute through the curriculum committee, and in particular through the governor who responsibility is equality.

- Parents/carers

We keep parents informed through newsletters and via the website.

- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups

We offer translations and use relevant services to support these groups in contributing.

- Our partners in the community

We have linked this policy with the approach taken by other local schools.

- Ongoing:

Please see the action plan to see how we will continue to develop the involvement of the school.

## **8 How we identify our equality objectives**

In line with our statutory duties we publish annually equality information and publish and report on equality objectives. We have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty.

Equality objectives can be viewed on the website.

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:

- i. from equality impact assessments (or other process for reviewing the potential impact on decisions made in schools)

Equality Impact Assessments help schools to review whether what is planned has a differential impact on one more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups

and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

ii. from the following data

RAISE online data, incident reporting data, Safe and Well at School Survey, Sociograms.

iii. and from involving relevant people (including disabled people) as described in section 7.

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 collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

In Brighton & Hove there are a range of services which support the equality agenda and help us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we 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.

e.g. All saints Church Patcham run regular assemblies and we visit at Christmas.

## **9 Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy was published in June 2017 to be actively promoted and disseminated.

This policy will be kept live on the website and reviewed as needed.

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.