



# Hotwells Primary School

## Equality Policy

*'Learning to Bring out the Best in Everyone'*

**Last reviewed:** January 2018

**Next review date:** January 2020

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# Equality Policy

## Introduction

This Equality Policy for Hotwells Primary School brings together and replaces 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 that 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. As a 'Rights Respecting School' we embrace the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational, health and wellbeing outcomes, and note the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents/carers, and Governors - 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 the best outcomes for our children and young people.



## School Context

Our school values and celebrates the individuality of all of our children; we are committed to giving all children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. We do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind.

As a school we are committed to knowing our school community well, and we frequently analyse data that provides information about 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.

Contextual data is recorded in our school Self-Evaluation document and published on our school website. It is shared regularly with staff and governors. We use relevant data sources such as the school census, attendance records, attainment, Raise online, audits, and records of racist and bullying incidents.

Our school vision statement “Learning to bring out the best in everyone” sums up everything we believe in and underpins everything we do. We promote high achievement and a love of learning so that each child will flourish in an ethos of respect, support, challenge and encouragement to succeed. Our aim is that all children at Hotwells will enjoy the richness of their learning and that their primary school experience will be a happy and memorable one.

Hotwells Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. Every child has the right to access all opportunities we offer equally, and to feel safe, secure and valued within our 3 school community. This policy helps to ensure that all children in our school receive equality of opportunity in relation to our school vision. We aim to reflect, teach about and celebrate the diverse nature of the local, national and global communities to which our children belong, and ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups. We will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning, and to 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.



## Protected Characteristics under The Equality Act

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),
- marriage and civil partnership (as an employer)
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

We also recognise that other forms of inequality exist (for example, socioeconomic disadvantage) which have the potential to give rise to discrimination and inequality of opportunity within our community. We include all forms of inequality under this policy.



## Our Aims for Equality

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, accept and welcome our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and will seek to involve the whole school community in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We aim:

- To promote positive attitudes to difference and foster good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, sexual orientation, abilities and ethnic origins;
- To promote justice, equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all and thereby allow all pupils to achieve the level of success and self-respect which they deserve;
- To instil in pupils an awareness of difference and to establish an environment where school becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self-esteem;
- To provide a safe and welcoming place for all our members;
- To provide an environment where sexist assumptions, attitudes and behaviour are continually challenged;
- To provide a curriculum which gives children the confidence that any form of discrimination can and must be eradicated;
- To contribute towards imparting a sense of citizenship in our pupils;
- To prevent and deal effectively with any form of discrimination within the school, and to work with other schools and with the Local Authority to share data and best practice;
- To ensure that the profile of equality issues is kept high in our school.

## How will we do this?

- We will ensure that equality issues are included yearly as part of whole staff training sessions;
- Our staff will adopt approaches in our teaching which recognise the contribution of positive role models;
- Our staff will, by careful use of language and choice of resources, challenge stereotypical views held in some parts of society;
- All subject leaders will continually review their schemes of work in the light of this policy with respect to content, methodology, aims and resources;
- We will seek regular feedback from the school community on how effectively we promote equality to inform school self-evaluation



## 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;
- Set targets and plan learning that secures good achievement for all pupils at all levels of ability;
- 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 communities;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and their impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

## Accessibility

We have produced an accessibility plan that addresses our statutory duties to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the school 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.

Our accessibility plan takes into account all members of the school community and is available from the school office and on our school website.



# Support for Pupils

## Auxiliary Aids

The school endeavours to make reasonable adjustments to our premises and resources and to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. This is detailed in our Accessibility Statement.

## Pastoral Support

Our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy, Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy outline support that is available in and outside of school for particular groups of pupils. School outings, residential trips and additional activities may be subsidised by the School to ensure no child is unable to participate due to financial barriers.

## Admissions

The Local Authority is our admission authority for Reception to Year 6 and the school follows their admissions criteria. The school has its own admissions policy for the Nursery class which is available on our website and from the school office. Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on any of the protected characteristics.

## Exclusions

Exclusions 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.

## Religious Observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. We constantly strive to use opportunities to develop the pupils' awareness and understanding of different religious beliefs and practices through our curriculum, assemblies, special events e.g. themed days, school meal menus, clubs and educational visits.



## Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation that protects our staff (including teachers, support staff, student teachers and volunteers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics.

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.

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. From Bristol LA we have access to advice and guidance on equalities matters relating to staff through the intranet, bulletins and advice given by HR professionals, and have recently (2015) established a Personnel & Wellbeing Group to ensure that confidential staffing issues are dealt with fairly with the support of governors.

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



# The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community

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

## **Our Headteacher will:**

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students, governors, 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;
- 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;
- deal with breaches of this policy in partnership with governors.

## **Our Governing Body will:**

- contribute to the development of this policy (especially by working with the Diversity and Inclusion Group reporting to Teaching and Learning Standards Committee);
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- evaluate the policy annually and review 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 School Development Plan (SDP).



**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.

**Our parents and carers will:**

- be given opportunities through the Diversity and Inclusion Group (DIG) 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 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, sex, sexual orientation or social class;
- respond to and report any equalities related bullying and incidents in line with school policy.



# Responding to Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying

## Definitions

We recognise that prejudice-based incidents and bullying behaviour are 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, homophobia, and negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand 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.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy defines bullying in the following way:

“Bullying is the repeated action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, where there is an imbalance of power. Imbalance of power means the person/people doing the bullying is/are stronger, there are more of them or they have ‘influence.’

Bullying is:

- Deliberate
- Repeated
- Hurtful

Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Indirect

We define ‘Prejudice-based 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.



## **Reporting, Recording and Responding to Prejudiced Based Bullying and Incidents**

We will record prejudiced-based incidents and prejudice-based bullying. We will 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.

Incidents are reported, recorded and responded to in line with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.



# 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.

## **Our pupils:**

We access our pupils' views through the School Council, pupil questionnaires, our PSHE, circle times, curriculum and formal and informal pupil interviews (individually and in groups).

## **Our staff:**

All staff members have the opportunity to share their views at regular meetings with their line managers and a confidential annual questionnaire.

## **Our School Governors:**

The school governors routinely scrutinise school policies and practice in regards to equality for all members of the school community. They set up working parties to address issues raised as appropriate.

## **Parents and Carers:**

Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute their views for the improvement and development of the school through annual parent questionnaires, response forms, parent consultation evenings and events, our open-door policy, meetings with staff and the DIG group.

## **Our Partners in the Community:**

Every opportunity is taken to engage and work with other partners in our community.

## **Equality Objectives:**

In line with our statutory duties we publish equalities information and publish and report on equalities objectives on our website.

**Date of this policy:** January 2016

**Date due for review:** January 2018



### **Relevant guidance:**

- Equality Act 2010
- Reporting and Dealing with Disablist Incidents in Bristol Schools
- <http://endbullying.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/dealingwithDisablistincid.pdf>

### **Reference to other Hotwells Primary School policies:**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Accessibility Plan

