

Statement on meeting the public sector equality duty

How we meet the public sector equality duty

Introduction

The public sector equality duty (PSED) was introduced in the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

What is the PSED?

The PSED means that in carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to **have due regard to the need to:**

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In relation to schools, it is unlawful for the responsible body to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for pupils
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Schools also have two specific duties. These are to:

- publish information which shows how they meet the PSED
- publish at least one equality objective.

What are the protected characteristics?

Obviously the principle of equality applies to all groups and individuals. However, for the purposes of the PSED there are nine 'protected characteristics'

- age (applies only to adults and not pupils)
- disability
- race (including Gypsy and Roma Traveller groups)
- religion, faith or belief
- gender
- gender identification/transgender
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership.

How we promote equality and eliminate discrimination in our school

Our mission statement

In Lepton CE J,I & N School we have always embraced the values that underpin the Equality Act and they are articulated in our mission statement and school ethos. Our mission statement is shown below.

Our aim is for our school to be a safe, welcoming and inspiring environment and a valued part of the community. A school where everyone feels happy and valued; a school where positive relationships are fostered between children, staff and parents; a school where bullying and anti-social behaviour is not tolerated but mutual trust and respect prevail; a school where children leave having identified a talent or skill through which they can become whatever they want to be.

This mission statement is shared by the governing body, all staff and pupils and serves as the focus for the strategic direction of the school.

School policies and procedures

The school has a comprehensive set of policies covering all aspects of school life. In order to ensure that these support the spirit of the Equality Act and promote the public sector equality duty, the governing body has carried out an initial equality impact assessment. As policies are subject to periodic review a detailed equality impact assessment will be completed and any revisions made as necessary.

Knowledge about the public sector equality duty

The governing body and staff have shared training on the Equality Act and public sector equality duty from an external consultant and all have copies of a written briefing.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation of our mission statement and the quality of educational provision is integrated into all of our work. In order to ensure it is rigorous we use the same methods and criteria as Ofsted inspectors. This is also the case for our self-evaluation of how well we meet the public sector equality duty, for which we have used the guidance for inspectors contained in:

Inspecting equalities: briefing for section 5 inspection (reference: 090197), Ofsted, 2012.

In order to meet and exceed the general and specific duties of the Equality Act, our aims as a whole school are:

- for all pupils to work in an ethos and atmosphere of dignity and fairness
- to secure and maintain excellent teaching, learning and assessment for all pupils
- to 'narrow the gaps' in achievement between different groups and national standards
- to ensure pupils are free from bullying, including all types of prejudice-based bullying
- to deal with unacceptable behaviour and disruptions to learning
- to build a cohesive school community where all pupils can thrive and achieve their potential.

Evaluating outcomes and provision

Pupils' achievement

In order to ensure that all pupils achieve to their potential, we build up a comprehensive knowledge of each individual child. This is used to set targets for every child, for classes and year groups. Progress towards these targets is analysed systematically and regularly and this information is used to tailor provision by providing additional challenge and/or support.

Performance in external tests is also analysed using a range of data sets provided by Ofsted, the Department for Education and the local authority. Based on this analysis, the school identifies priorities and objectives for achievable and measurable outcomes as part of the specify duty.

Data accumulated over many years provides robust evidence that the school successfully meets its duty to provide an excellent education for all pupils.

Behaviour and safety

Behaviour and safety in our school are good to outstanding. The children have excellent attitudes to their learning and take a great pride in their work.

Bullying is very rare but there are clear procedures for dealing with all bullying and particularly any prejudice-related bullying. Staff are trained to identify and deal with this effectively.

Surveys and discussions show that all pupils feel safe from bullying, harassment and oppressive behaviour. There is a strong bond of trust between children and adults. The children are very confident to share any concerns and know that staff will address all issues of discrimination and prejudice quickly and sensitively.

Direct observations and school records show that the school is very successful in promoting excellent relationships at all levels.

Teaching

Staff use a range of teaching and learning strategies in order to engage pupils of all abilities and learning styles. Where appropriate there is additional support and special provision for certain groups.

The curriculum covers equalities issues very well. Appropriate to age and stage of development pupils learn about issues such as prejudice, promoting community cohesion and understanding and appreciating diversity.

In the classroom, practical issues such as seating and grouping arrangements support good relations and respect between different groups of pupils. Teaching materials in all subjects have positive images of all people including those with protected characteristics.

Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and other evidence demonstrates that all pupils have access to a rich and varied curriculum and their personal characteristics and learning needs are taken into account.

Leadership and management

The governing body and leaders at all levels are committed to taking positive action to advance equality and tackle discrimination. This is demonstrated in our statement of overarching policy, the school improvement plan, self-evaluation documents and partnerships, especially with parents and carers.

Equality objectives

- raise standards in mathematics for girls in order to narrow the gap with boys by the end of KS2.
- raise standards in Reading for pupils identified as having SEN in order to narrow the gap with non SEN pupils.
- increase the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals attaining levels better than those expected.