



**PUBLIC SECTOR  
EQUALITY DUTY  
AND  
EQUALITY POLICY**



**Spring 2015**

## Contents

Preamble .....	2
Our Single Equality Plan .....	3
The Legal Context.....	3
Introduction .....	5
Purpose of the policy .....	6
Development of the policy.....	6
Links to other policies and documentation .....	7
Discrimination, harassment and victimisation .....	7
Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance .....	7
Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying .....	7
Equality of opportunity between different groups .....	8
Fostering good relations .....	8
Other equality issues.....	9
Publishing Equality Objectives .....	9
Roles and Responsibilities.....	9
Equal Opportunities for staff .....	10
Monitoring and Reviewing the policy .....	11
Disseminating the policy .....	11
Single Equality Plan .....	12

## Preamble

On 1 October, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. Birch Hill Primary School is already aware and has acted on the main changes which are:

Protection against discrimination is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or have recently given birth, or who are undergoing gender reassignment.

It is now unlawful for us to ask health-related questions of applicants before a job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. This means that MVPS should no longer require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

The DfE are considering the implications of this in relation to existing guidance for schools on establishing fitness and ability to teach (as required by the Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003).

New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics.

It is now unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling.

The Act will extend the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. However this duty is not due to come into effect until a later date, following consultation on implementation and approach.

## Our Single Equality Plan

Birch Hill has in place the three specific duties – race, gender and disability. These are monitored and reviewed annually and both the policies and objectives are available to the whole school community.

Our single equality plan brings together a range of actions showing how the general and specific equality duties are being addressed.

We will:

- Publish our plan on the school website
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available
- Review of progress and impact annually

In developing the plan we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be addressed.

We will ensure that this Single Equality Plan is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Equality Duty. Promoting the priorities identified within our Single Equality Plan will be a continuous process.

It will be taken in partnership with the school's community. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the plan. The roles and responsibilities related to the plan are included in Appendix A.

## The Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010's Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011 and has three aims under the general duty for Schools. To have due regard of the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct

prohibited by the Act: by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Foster good relations between those with a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The specific duties that are required to demonstrate compliance with the equality duties are:

To publish equality information by April 2012 and then annually.

To publish equality objectives by April 2012 and then at least every four years.

Our school has considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected equality groups. Using the information we have gathered we have decided upon our equality objectives. Our plan to meet these objectives will be monitored annually.

The outcomes are published within our Single Equality Plan. The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a four year cycle.

## Introduction

Birch Hill is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

### Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

**All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

**We recognize, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

**We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

**We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

**We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development

**We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential

**We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of

pupils raises standards across the whole school.

## **Purpose of the policy**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

### **Two “specific duties”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6<sup>th</sup> 2012
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6<sup>th</sup> 2012

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

## **Development of the policy**

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework 2012, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

## **Links to other policies and documentation**

This policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

## **Discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity

## **Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance**

We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

## **Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices about disability and special educational needs
- prejudices about race, religion or belief,
- Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum,
- prejudices about gender and sexual orientation.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a serious behaviour log to record prejudice-related incidents This information is reviewed regularly and action taken to reduce incidents

### **Equality of opportunity between different groups**

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to try to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age- appropriate literacy and number skills.

We collect, analyse and publish attainment, achievement, attendance and (when necessary) exclusion data on the school population by gender and ethnicity, pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability; by year group, ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils

We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving

We take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan 2011-14 designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

### **Fostering good relations**

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people

We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences

## Other equality issues

When reviewing school policies, equalities considerations will be taken into account. The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaire, parents' evenings, and other feedback, including any pupil surveys and School Council minutes.
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

## Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives.

### Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

## Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

### **Governing body**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

### **Headteacher and SLT team**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

### ***Teaching and Support Staff***

All teaching and support staff

will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability.
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils.
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult.
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

## **Equal Opportunities for staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing the policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy regularly and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

### **Disseminating the policy**

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available on the school website, as paper copies in the school office.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

## Single Equality Plan-draft

Equality strand	Action/Equality Objective	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible for implementing?	What are the time frames?	Early success indicators
All	<b>Publish and promote the Equality Plan through the school website, newsletter and staff meetings.</b>	Question about parent awareness of Equality Plan in annual survey.	Headteacher/ designated member of staff.	Survey September 2015	Staff are familiar with the principles of the Equality Plan and use them when planning lessons, creating classroom displays. Parents are aware of the Equality Plan.
All	<b>To review and action accordingly how we as a school record the following information by protected characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability</li> <li>• Attendance levels</li> <li>• Exclusions</li> <li>• Rates of bullying/racist incidents</li> <li>• Access arrangements and take-up rates for school activities</li> <li>• Participation of parents at information evenings and school surveys.</li> </ul>	Review analysis on a quarterly basis.	SLT	From September 2015 for one year	Records better reflect breakdown by protected characteristics.
All	<b>Monitoring and analysis of pupil achievement by race, gender and disability.</b>	Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability.	Headteacher. Governing body.	Annually in Sept.	Analysis of teacher assessments/annual data demonstrates the gap of narrowing for equality groups.

Birch Hill Primary School Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Policy

All	Ensure that the curriculum promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, which reflects the school's diversity in terms of race, religion and belief, gender and disability.	Increase in pupils' participation, confidence and achievement levels.	Subject Leaders through lesson plans.	Sept 2015-July 2016	Notable increase in participation and confidence of targeted groups.
All	Recognise and represent the talents of disabled pupils in Gifted and Talented programmes, and ensure representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race, gender and disability.	Gifted and Talented register monitored by race, gender and disability.	Member of staff leading on G&T.	From September 2015	Analysis of the Gifted and Talented register indicates it is changing to reflect the school's diversity.
All	Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity.	Increase in pupil participation, confidence and positive identity – monitor through PSHE.	Headteacher.	Ongoing	More diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups.
Race	Ensure all newly arrived pupils and their parents/carers are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in class assemblies, school council elections, fund raising etc.	School council representation monitored by race, gender, disability.	Member of staff leading on school council.	Ongoing	Increased diversity in school council membership. Increased involvement of parent/carers.

Birch Hill Primary School Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Policy

<b>Race</b>	<b>Identify, respond and report racist incidents. Report the figures to the Governing Body/Local Authority on a termly basis.</b>	Data to assess the impact of the school's response to incidents i.e. have whole school/year group approaches led to a decrease in incidents. Are pupils and parents satisfied with the response?	Headteacher/Governing Body.	Reporting: December, April, July.	Teaching staff are aware of and respond to racist incidents. Consistent nil reporting is challenged by the Governing Body.
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Introduce initiative to encourage girls to take up sport outside the curriculum requirements, to make participation rates more reflective of the school population.</b>	Increased participation of girls in sports clubs and out of school sport activities.	Member of staff leading on sports/PE.	Ongoing	More girls take up after-school sports clubs.
<b>Disability</b>	<b>To ensure the school develops children's awareness of disability.</b>	Develop a programme of visitors, displays and activities that promote understanding of disability.	SLT.	September 2015 – 2016	Pupils show understanding and respect for people with a disability.