

Pirbright Village Primary School



Equalities Policy

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Reviewed	Annual (Action Plan every 4 years)
Next Review Date	Summer 2027

The School’s Equality Action Plan sits alongside this policy and provides the Equality Objectives for 2024-2028 along with a review of current practice within the school (2024).

Introduction

Pirbright Village Primary 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.

Approach

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

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential
- 7. 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.

Recognising & Respecting Difference – The Protected Characteristics

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or students may face in relation to their protected characteristics in order to promote a more equitable world.

Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made to meet the needs of the individual

Gender (including gender reassignment) – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs

Religion and Belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with

Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds

Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers

Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference

Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have

Pregnancy and Maternity – we believe that our staff, parents & carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth

We will take all reasonable steps to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage
- meet the specific needs of individuals
- encourage full participation in school life

We recognise that some pupils and families may face multiple or intersecting disadvantages and we will respond to these needs appropriately.

The Equality Act 2010

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

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable (at least one objective).

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.

The School’s Equality Action Plan sits alongside this policy and provides the Equality Objectives for 2024-2028 along with a review of current practice within the school (2024).

Eliminating 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 all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so 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
- Clear procedures are in place for pupils, staff and parents/carers to report concerns. These are outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of prejudice-based bullying.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- ➔ racism and xenophobia
- ➔ homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying
- ➔ sexism and gender-based discrimination
- ➔ bullying related to disability or special educational needs
- ➔ discrimination based on religion or belief

We:

- ✓ educate pupils about difference, respect and inclusion through the curriculum
- ✓ challenge discriminatory language and behaviour immediately
- ✓ support both the victim and the perpetrator to promote understanding and change

All incidents are recorded, analysed and reported to governors. This information is used to identify patterns, inform interventions and reduce future incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We actively work to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to learning and participation.

- 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 strategies.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement.
- We act to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age appropriate literacy and number skills.
- We implement an Accessibility Plan designed to:
 - increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment;
 - improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.
- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as disadvantaged pupils and children receiving the service funding.
- We ensure staff are trained to understand the importance of equality and how we can reduce barriers across the school.

- We have an elected Diversity Champion with the specific responsibility of auditing, reviewing and advising on all provision.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We are committed to building a school culture that promotes respect, understanding and positive relationships.

- 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
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school

Safeguarding and Equality

Equality and safeguarding are closely linked. We recognise that discrimination, prejudice and inequality can place pupils at greater risk of harm.

We ensure that:

- ✓ safeguarding procedures take account of the additional vulnerabilities of certain groups
- ✓ staff are trained to recognise and respond to equality-related safeguarding concerns
- ✓ all pupils feel safe, valued and able to report concerns

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ✓ ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy
- ✓ reviewing equality information and objectives

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ✓ leading on the implementation of this policy
- ✓ ensuring staff are trained and supported
- ✓ addressing incidents of discrimination appropriately

All staff are responsible for:

- ✓ promoting equality and inclusion in their practice
- ✓ challenging discrimination and prejudice
- ✓ modelling inclusive behaviour

All members of the school community are expected to uphold the principles of this policy.

Equal Opportunities for 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. 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.

In line with our duties, the school will:

- publish equality information annually
- publish equality objectives at least every four years

This information is available on the school website and is reviewed regularly by governors.