

Equality Policy



Written in December 2011, by Hannah Moss in line with the Equality Act 2010, updated November 2015 in line with the Equality Act 2010 and schools (May 2014), which also relates to the Public Sector Equality duty 2011

Designated leads:

Brian Owens (Headteacher)

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The nominated governor with responsibility for equality is:

To be reviewed annually – date of next review November 2018

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited below, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as 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
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men, including transgender.
- people of different sexuality.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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 consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- People of different sexuality

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people of different sexuality

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.
- sexuality

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7), in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.
- sexuality

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

These principles were developed by INSTEAD and Derbyshire County Council

Protected characteristics covered in this policy in line with Equality Act 2010 and schools (May 2014) include:

- **sex**
- **race**
- **disability**
- **religion or belief**
- **sexual orientation**
- **gender reassignment**
- **pregnancy or maternity**

It is unlawful to discriminate due to association or perception, even when someone may not fit into the particular protected characteristic in question in a given situation eg someone being discriminated against for being gay, whether or not they actually in fact gay.

Ethos Statement

The school aims for children to be happy and successful in line with the outcomes of Every Child Matters. For children to be happy they need to have a good self-image, a feeling that they are valued and that they are making progress. For children to be successful, the staff cater for all the different aspects of a child's development – physical, social, academic, spiritual and religious. We are concerned that each child should get the most from, and contribute the most to, the society of which he/she is already a member. *(Extract taken from the school prospectus)*

School Context

Edwalton School recognises that all members of the school community are unique individuals entitled to equality of opportunity and continuing support. It is a primary school maintained by Nottinghamshire Education Authority. The school is in the extreme south of the Nottingham Conurbation and serves a diverse socio-economic community. Further, it continues to attract pupils from both within and outside of the designated catchment making it a rich and diverse school that respects many values and beliefs.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces all previous policies relating to Race Equality, Gender Equality and Disability Equality. It has been developed to help the school meet the following general duties;

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- To advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- To foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Aims and Values

We are committed to:

- creating an atmosphere of caring and purpose derived from commitment to moral and religious principles
- engendering a lifelong love of learning
- encouraging each child to strive for his or her best in intellectual, physical and spiritual growth
- helping each child to develop relationships with others which are founded on mutual respect and the pursuit of lasting happiness
- encouraging and developing leadership and active citizenship within the school and wider
- community which fosters a sense of dignity, vocation and purpose for every individual
- developing and maintaining excellence in teaching and learning

Values

- we value each student as an individual recognising that effective learning starts with what the learner can do
- imagination, curiosity, creativity, enthusiasm, risk taking, questioning, self-motivation, responsibility, perseverance, commitment and pride in all aspects of achievement
- co-operative learning, independent and collaborative planning
- the central role of effective pastoral support in relation to academic, emotional, spiritual and social development

- parental and community involvement
- the ability and confidence to adapt to changing circumstance
- the continuing learning of all staff
- an understanding of the global dimension in learning and teaching

Addressing Prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

At Edwalton School we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life and beyond to provide equal opportunity for all students and staff to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability, sexual orientation. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement and we take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our students can flourish and achieve all five outcomes of **'Every Child Matters'** (be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being);
- provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- prepare students for life in a diverse society in which they are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
- actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.
- Provide curriculum planning that ensures the skills, experience and expertise of people from the local communities are utilised (for example by serving as role models).
- Information about languages and dialects spoken by pupils will also be used in curriculum planning such as language of the month.

To achieve these aims we will:

- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- publish and share our policies with the whole community on our website and via the school office;
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups and individuals are progressing well and no group/individual is subject to disadvantage;
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- ensure that resources within the curriculum reflect the diversity of the school, local community and wider society
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others.

The school has a legal obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment and victimisation, as well as the duty to foster positive relations between groups and individuals.

At Edwalton we adopted Recommendation 12 of the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that the definition of a racist incident should be:

“A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.”

We have also adopted Nottinghamshire Police definition for a hate incident and crime which is:-

‘A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender’s prejudice against people because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other reason.’

All reported incidents and complaints will be investigated within a specified time period and will not take any longer than can be reasonably expected. It is important that staff are aware of the priority attached to supporting victims and that prior to an investigation, all allegations are taken seriously. Any kind of harassment is intimidatory and its victims can feel isolated and immobilized in taking action. The designated member of staff will coordinate the support that is offered to victims.

In order to maintain the integrity of the school’s policy, it should never be implied that harassment or attack is the victim’s fault. The victim should be asked about the kind of support they need. If they wish, this may include support from outside the School. Consideration should be given to establishing a peer support scheme to help the victim and provide mentors who can support the victims.

The identification of a victim of any incident may not at first be apparent. The investigation of its context and background must take account of the possibility of serious provocation lying at the heart of the responses of the individual’s concerned. This is not to condone retaliatory action, particularly the sanctions contemplated, should take account of the degree of provocation.

Principles for effective action:

1. Victims and, where appropriate, their families should have a clear point of contact for advise and support. Wherever possible this should be with the teacher designated with responsibilities towards the equal opportunities policy. At Edwalton this will rest with the Head Teacher or their Deputy.
2. Alternate sources of support should be identified either amongst staff or within the local community in case the designated member of staff is unavailable or the victim expresses a wish to be supported by someone of his or her own choosing.
3. The procedures for reporting all incidents and/or making a complaint should be made known to pupils and staff.
4. Victims should be kept fully informed and, if necessary advised where they can go for further assistance. Victims should be advised of their rights to contact the police if they think a criminal offence has occurred.
5. There should be clear opportunities for victims and/or their families to express their wishes. These should always be treated seriously and acted on if appropriate.
6. Perpetrators should be removed from situations that might upset or antagonise the victim.

Dealing With Perpetrators

Situations in which incidents of harassment occur often vary enormously. In every case, the context in which the incident takes place will influence the school’s response. This may range from gentle but firm correction and explanation to the use of disciplinary procedures. Incidents do need to be assessed in terms of seriousness to assist everyone in gauging their response. The overriding need is to ensure that a clear message is sent to perpetrators that their behaviour will not be tolerated. A pattern of seemingly minor events can have a cumulative effect on the victim and the victim’s community.

It is important that staff and pupils perceive the response to be genuinely even-handed. Firm rejection of the offensive behaviour needs to be combined with a framework of discipline that is perceived as fair. Sanctions should not just be punitive but should include counselling and training where appropriate. Perpetrators should therefore be encouraged to participate in activities aimed at challenging and changing prejudice-related and unacceptable behaviour. Wherever possible, a full apology to the victim should be sought from the perpetrator and should accompany any sanctions imposed. Parents and pupils who are responsible for prejudiced-related conduct play an active role in dealing with it. The procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and especially prejudiced-related incidents will be described in the Home-School Agreement.

All staff members should understand the steps that will be taken in response to an incident.

They will need to be clear about:

1. Their expected initial response and the boundaries for their independent action;
2. In the event of an incident occurring, that it should be referred on to be dealt with by a senior or designated member of staff;

3. Incidents requiring the direct involvement of the Head teacher;
4. The involvement, where necessary of the Governing Body;
5. The involvement, where necessary of the Police;
6. The need to record all incidents;
7. The follow up to an incident including dealing with its impact on the school community;
8. The expected timescale for responding to and following up an incident.

Monitoring and Reporting of Incidents.

It is important to record all incidents for the following reasons:

1. To obtain a full picture of the frequency and nature of incidents;
2. To target additional resources to combat inappropriate behaviour
3. To identify groups or individuals who are regular victims or perpetrators of harassment;
4. To monitor the effectiveness of the policy and its measures to prevent inappropriate behaviour;
5. The County Council is required to publish data relating to the number of reported 'hate' (prejudice-related) incidents as part of its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

A copy of all completed Hate Incident Reporting Forms will be forwarded on to the Achievement and Equality Team to assist in the monitoring of such incidents across the LA.

Involvement of Parents.

The school's procedures for dealing with incidents will be publicised and explained to parents and carers. Parents and carers will be informed if their child is involved in a 'hate' or prejudice-related incident, either as a victim or a perpetrator. If possible, it should be ascertained whether the incident is isolated or part of a pattern of behaviour against the family in school or in the wider community. Parents and carers of perpetrators need to understand how seriously incidents are taken at Edwalton Primary School.

The number of prejudice-related incidents and the responses made to them will be reported to parents and carers in the Annual Report to Parents. This would demonstrate to the community our commitment to the creation of an incident free learning environment.

Complaints

If a parent, carer or member of staff is not satisfied with the steps taken as a result of an incident, the complaints procedure is the same as for other complaints. If the head teacher cannot resolve the complaint satisfactorily, the complainant should be referred to the Governing Body. If this proves unsuccessful the complainant should be referred to the LA. Complainants have the right to involve outside parties in a support capacity. The LA will provide advice and support to schools in dealing with complaints about 'hate or prejudice-related' incidents although it will be made clear to parents and carers that the LA can only act in an advisory capacity.

Leadership, Management and Governance

Edwalton School is committed to:

- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all students and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- working in partnership with families, the NCC LA, Flying High Trust and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our Equality and Diversity Policy is followed.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation;
- meet requirements to publish equality schemes;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;

- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

The Head of School

It is the Head of School's responsibility to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy;
- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

All members of staff

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body and FHT as required.

Policy Planning, review and development

In the planning and development stage of policy-making, we will ensure we have consulted and taken into account stakeholder views. All improvement plans will be designed with an element of impact assessment built in to monitor the success of each activity.

Review

There will be a systematic review of the impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity to address any areas of inequality. (E.g. achievement and attainment will be analysed to ensure progress for all, especially in relation to any identified disadvantaged groups; attendance and exclusion data will be reviewed to ensure no over-representation of any one group.)

Our target-setting processes ensure appropriate, challenging targets are set in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual students / cohorts.

The policy should be reviewed annually in relation to the aims and content of other school policies such as:

Equal Opportunities Policy

Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Prevent Policy

Welfare of the Whole Child Policy (Child Protection and Safeguarding).

Anti-Bullying policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment Policy

Special Needs Policy

Gifted and Talented Policy

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Each student’s progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status. In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the school meets its duty to positively promote diversity. The data collected is used to inform further school planning, target-setting and decision-making.

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended in 2005)
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2006/2010
- Equality Act 2010 and schools (May 2014)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Duty to Promote Community Cohesion, Education and Inspections Act 2006

This policy was reviewed on:

Date: 25.11.16

Chair of governors: Sara Dawson

Governor with responsibility for Equality: