

Single Equality Policy



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Reviewed by: Michelle Motley

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Merryhills Primary School

Single Equality Policy

Background

This policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (i.e., Race) and Gender. Through this policy Merryhills Primary School will fulfil its public duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity, and where appropriate, age (applicable to employees only). The guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff, and governors in addition to visitors to Merryhills Primary School.

Legal framework

Duties as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and its Schedules. There are nine equality strands (known as Protected Characteristics):

- Disability;
- ethnicity (including Gypsy and Traveller groups);
- gender;
- gender identity and transgender;
- faith, religion and belief;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sexual orientation (homophobia);
- pregnancy and maternity;
- age.

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimization. Merryhills Primary School will seek to achieve positive action in respect of the Act.

It should be noted that all schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties, and failure to do so could result in legal action against the school's Governing Body. Employees of the school acting on behalf of the Governing Body are also liable for their own discriminatory actions.

Good Practice

1. We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged in the school.
2. We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the World communities.
3. We support 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. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community.

4. We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the LA. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g., homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations and establishing our school ethos, we are guided by 9 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, religious affiliation, national origin or national status,
- whatever their gender or gender identity,
- 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. 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, women and men are recognised;
- sexual identity.

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

- positive attitudes and actions 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, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. Policies and procedures 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 of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely. People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. Consultation involves:

- disabled and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual.

Principle 7: We address prejudice and prejudice related bullying. We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties listed above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islam phobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudice reflecting sexism or homophobia.

Principle 8: Society as a whole should benefit. 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 and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual.

Principle 9: Objectives. Each year we formulate and publish specific and measurable equality objectives, based on the evidence we have collected, in relation to:

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

Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Guiding Principles for Merryhills Primary School will be set out formally. They will be reviewed annually in consultation with key stakeholders.
2. The equality employment information will be monitored and reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.
3. Merryhills Primary School will undertake Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) exercises when renewing or reviewing policy or practice to ensure full compliance with the Equality Act 2011.

Curriculum

1. Curriculum information will also be evaluated by looking specifically at equality groups in addition to the standard analysis conducted by the school and adjustments as appropriate to ensure that equality groups are supported positively.
2. All other data relating to whole school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that groups are supported positively.
3. When it is reviewed, each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our Guiding Principles as set out above.

Staff and Governors

1. 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.
2. The Chair of the Governing Body has the role of monitoring the implementation of this policy.
3. 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.
4. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of this policy.

All staff are expected to:

- adhere to this policy;
- promote equality and inclusion in their classrooms, amongst colleagues and with visitors to the school;
- deal with any prejudice related incidents that may occur;
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect our Guiding Principles

- provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of equality groups and any issues that may arise, e.g., attendance, bullying, exclusion;
 - undertake or support Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) processes;
 - attend appropriate training that enables Merryhills Primary School to keep up-to-date with equality issues.
5. All staff and Governors have access to training and a selection of resources which discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion. We value the opportunity to take a holistic approach in fulfilling our Equality Duties.
 6. All staff and Governors will exercise their Safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of Human Rights is addressed immediately.
 7. Merryhills Primary School is opposed to all forms of prejudice that could act as a barrier to achieving our legal duties and a cohesive community. These include:
 - disability;
 - Looked After Children;
 - special educational needs;
 - racism and xenophobia;
 - gender and transgender;
 - religious groups and communities;
 - Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
 - sexism and homophobia.

DISABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Legal Duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on school, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

Under our specific duty we will review and revise this Policy every three years.

School Capacity and Accessibility

The school promotes disability and equality through:

- The provision of two disabled toilets, one of which is located in the main foyer
- The provision of washing and showering facilities for disabled users
- Provision of smaller playground support during lunch time play
- Disability Risk Assessment of the school premises when appropriate
- At least one classroom per year group on the ground floor step free
- Full time Welfare Assistant
- Graduated slopes into two classrooms from the playground area
- The provision of handrails in both stairwells up to the additional classrooms
- The school building allows full access to wheelchair users.
- First Aid Training for staff: 17 fully qualified First Aiders, (First Aid at Work), 4 First Aiders for School Staff and 4 Paediatric First Aiders.
- Training for specific medical conditions as needed, provided by the NHS.

Medical Care Plans

If a child has a serious medical condition, they will need to have a signed and up to date (within one year) Care Plan. This needs to be reviewed annually or more frequently, with new medical advice or changes to the child's circumstances. Without this Care Plan we may refuse to allow your child on site, if we think we cannot meet their needs.

Reasonable Adjustments

The DDA requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils and users of the school are not put at substantial disadvantage and are able to access the same opportunities as non-disabled peers. Specifically, the school intends that disabled pupils and users will have the same access to the curriculum, to information and access to the school environment and facilities as non-disabled pupils and users. In planning developments to deliver this intention the school considers the needs of current and future pupils and users of the school.

The school will be successful in making reasonable adjustments when disabled persons can, wherever possible, participate fully:

- In the classroom
- In the school curriculum
- At all times and in all parts of the building

And when:

- Disabled persons feel part of the life of the school
- Disabled persons are included by their peers in all parts of school life
- Parents of disabled pupils feel their child is part of the life of the school
- Staff feel confident in working with disabled pupils

CONSULTATION

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the policy:

- Feedback from Learning Conversations and meetings with parents and carers
- Feedback from parent surveys
- Input from staff surveys or INSET
- Feedback from the School Council, Values Hour, PHSE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes
- Issues raised in SEN Annual Reviews or review of progress on Learning Support Plans
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings

Parents and Carers are kept informed through our school prospectus, parent handbook, website and newsletters.