



Equality and Diversity Policy

Created/Revised:	September 2023
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Review Details:	Updated February 2024
Review Date:	February 2025
Approved by Governing Body:	September 2022

POLICY STATEMENT

Village Primary School 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.

DEFINITION

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 recognise, 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 our school.
- 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 and protected groups. 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 or sexual orientation.

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

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.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations Development of the Policy

This policy was developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers. It is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and providing an inclusive school. When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework, 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

Although 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, where necessary, in our School Development Plan, Self-Evaluation Form, website and regular newsletters.

Where necessary, there are also references in the Behaviour, Admissions, SEN and Anti-Bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors.

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

What are doing to eliminate 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 Head Teacher 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 to day life of the school.
- 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.

BEHAVIOUR, EXCLUSIONS AND ATTENDANCE

The school policy on Positive Behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. 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 around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia,
- Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

There is guidance in the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data half termly and take action to reduce the number of incidents.

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

- We know the needs of our school population very well and we have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We hold school events which raise awareness of cultural diversity and equality.
- We are working towards the UNICEF Rights Respecting School award.
- We collect data and analyse progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps.
- We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".
- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Hearing impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller pupil joins our school.
- 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 are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- For certain identified children we have Accessibility Plans 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.

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, for example:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys

POSITIVE ACTION

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support.

What we are doing to foster good relations?

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes British Values, 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, Citizenship and SEAL 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 events

Other ways we address equality issues

- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and wellbeing of our pupils. 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 annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening & parent-voice
- Analyse responses from staff surveys
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children from Pupil Voice, the Standards' Team, Crew Leaders, PSHE lessons and whole school survey
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings

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 data Analysis which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING OBJECTIVES

The monitoring of the objectives takes place through the School Improvement Plan monitoring activities and is reported to governors termly.

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. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

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.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

HEAD TEACHER AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Head Teacher 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.

The SLT have day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes against the Equality Act.

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 a curriculum 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 personalised 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.

- We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act in staff professional development training at the start of the school year
- 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.

The Governing Body of Village Primary School is committed to the following principles:

- 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 annually and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

DISSEMINATING THE POLICY

This Equality Policy is available on the school website in the staff room and staff handbook on display for visitors, including parents and carers and as part of induction for new staff and volunteers.

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The Equality Policy have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders
- The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need
- The school Equality Policy aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives
- The SLT have responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The school ensures that visitors and volunteers to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the school council
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies
- The school takes part in annual events and regularly celebrates prominent current and historical role models to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender
- The school environment is increasingly accessible possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment
- Parents' open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information
- The Governing Body and staff is increasingly representative of the community it serves
- Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled