

Equality Statement – Bishops Lydeard Church School

At Bishops Lydeard Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At Bishops Lydeard Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

Equality in Teaching and learning

We provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. We do this by:

- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and preparing them for life in a diverse society
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community without stereotyping
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Utilising teaching approaches appropriate for the whole school population which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Equality in Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, religion, belief, disability and/or socio-economic background.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are keen to ensure that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Equality Principles:

The Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 has 3 main aims:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our school is committed to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means, not simply treating everybody the same but, understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Parents/ carers
- Governors
- Multi-agency staff linked to the staff, AEN services staff, school improvement services staff, school attendance service
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We want to provide an environment which is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimization of any kind. We want to educate our pupils in an environment which recognizes, celebrates and draws upon the diversity of our community and offers equal respect, appropriate support and fair rewards for all our pupils.

At our school, equality is a key principle for treating all people the same. The Equality Act defines eight 'Protected Characteristics':

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion and belief
7. Gender
8. Sexual orientation

Promoting Equality through the Curriculum

Learning and Teaching

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- Ensure quality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;

- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions;
- Develop pupil's advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- Ensure that the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum cover issues of equalities, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion;
- All subject departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different ethnic groups to the subject matter;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all pupil groupings;
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils;
- Identify resources that support staff development.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light. To secure the desired outcomes we recognise:

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils;
- Adults in the school will try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- The school should place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEN policy and Disability Equality Scheme);
- The school must provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources;
- All pupils are to be encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning;
- A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

Curriculum

We aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity;
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- All steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all pupils, their linguistic needs are taken into account and their learning styles are considered.
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;

- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored;
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

Resources and Materials

When ordering new resources and materials we consider how they show equality

The provision of good quality resources and materials within our school is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect "the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexual diverse society;"
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints;
- Show positive images of males and females in society including people with disabilities;
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context;
- Include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community consistent with health and safety
- Not include explicitly and implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist materials.

Language

We recognise that it is important that at our school that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;

- Does not offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem;
- Uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals e.g. Inuit rather Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians.
- Use first language effectively for learning

Extra-Curricular Provision

It is the policy of our school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coach drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy.

We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contract with children adhere to these guidelines and are CRB checked.

Provision for Bilingual Pupils

We undertake at our school to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Roma children;
- Those from refugee families;
- Pupils whom English is an additional language;
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom.

Personal Development and support for SEMH

- All staff takes account of disability needs, gender, religious and ethnic differences and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils;
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race;
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore where appropriate remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community;
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include pupil's access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages.

We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process;
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school (give examples);
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All supply staff are made aware of equalities policies and practices;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.:

- Unwanted attentions (verbal or physical);
- Unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender).

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to each out to all diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond. We would do this by:

- All parents/carers being encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school;
- Setting up as part of the schools commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of members of the school community including pupils, staff, local community members, parents/carers, local faith groups and local disability groups has been developed to support the school with matters related to its equalities duties;
- Encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities e.g. school fair, black history month celebrations, Eid celebrations, harvest festival etc;

- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities.

Monitoring and review

Equality is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring and due regard is given to the promotion of all aspects of equality within our school community. The Personnel and Policy (P and P) committee of the Governors are responsible for monitoring this by

- Leading discussions, supporting in the appointment process and supporting appropriate meetings.
- Working closely with the pupils and staff

We regularly review the impact of our equalities work on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for pupils, staff and parents from the equality strands referred to in this document. We pay specific reference to the impact that our work has on the attainment of pupils from different groups. We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of individual pupils to ensure that everyone is making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Interventions and resources are available to support groups or individual pupils where information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information. School performance information is compared to national data and Local Authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances. Our small cohort numbers do make this data unreliable as our statistics can vary considerably year on year.

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's Equality policy is maintained and updated regularly;
- procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- all racist incidents or incidents which a breach of this document are fully investigated and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to all said incidents

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Along with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with this document;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;

- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Not discriminating on grounds of race, disability, or other equality issues;

.Legislation used as guidance when preparing this document

- Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Race Relations Act (2000)
- The Human Rights Act (2000)
- The Children's Act (2004)
- The European Directives
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003) and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations (2003)
- The respective Codes of Practice associated with the legislation
- Policy Development