



Equality Policy and Strategy

Contents

1 Introduction

2 School Context

3 Our commitment

4 Definitions of protected characteristics

5 Achievements and Objectives

6 Publishing and raising awareness

7 Breaches of the policy

1 Introduction and Purpose

Brentry Primary School believes that inclusion is a basic human right of every child and adult. We value diversity, welcome and respect all members of our local community and our visitors, whatever their age, ability, background or circumstances.

We provide opportunities for all to participate fully and equally. We expect all members of the school community to appreciate and understand the differences in all peoples and communities, to seek to help others and to speak out against injustice and bullying. The school will promote equality of opportunity by example, through its policies, curriculum and staffing. We are committed to working with all members of our community to remove any attitudinal, physical or organisational barriers.

This policy contains the school's approach to all protected characteristics of disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual identity (sexual orientation and gender reassignment) and cultural or social background. It combines the previous policies of Disability & Equality, Accessibility Plan and Equal Opportunity. There are separate policies that cover recruitment and employment which comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

1.1 Purpose

- To articulate the school's commitment to equality and, therefore, the values that permeate all other school policies and practices.
- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or comes into contact with, our school community is valued and respected.
- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.
- To explore the school's links with the wider, national and global community.
- To comply with statutory duties under equality legislation and relevant Codes of Practice.
- To address all equality and anti-discrimination issues in one document.
- To ensure any barriers to learning and participation of any groups within our community are reduced or removed.
- To ensure that everyone is treated with respect and that any form of prejudice is challenged and eliminated.

2 School Context:

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school based in the north of Bristol, in an area of mixed social housing, between the wards of Henbury and Southmead. The majority of pupils (65%) are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is just above the national average. The proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is 26%, which is higher than the national figure. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than national average. The school's deprivation indicator at 0.32 is considerably higher than the national average.

3 Our commitment:

Brentry Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of any personal / protected characteristic. School management and Governors are committed to making all reasonable efforts to ensure that equality is taken into account in all decision-making. We will continue to review our policies, practices and procedures so that they do not adversely affect anyone because of any protected characteristic.

4 Definitions of protected characteristics:

4.1 What do we mean by Disability Equality?

We recognise that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

4.2 What do we mean by Gender Equality?

We recognise that a person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to boys or girls.

We recognise that stereotypes exist for both genders and some can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes and welcome the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with specific provision for Gender Equality.

4.3 What do we mean by Gender Reassignment Equality?

We recognise that a person may express their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical gender that they were born with.

We understand gender reassignment does not necessarily require a medical process to be undertaken and that a person will be protected because of gender reassignment if they:

- Make their intention known to someone at the school
- Start to behave or dress according to the gender they identify with
- Undergo treatment such as surgery or hormone therapy
- Have already received gender recognition under the gender recognition act 2004

The school will also respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

4.4 What do we mean by Pregnancy and Maternity Equality?

Treating a woman (or a female pupil of any age) less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger, is unacceptable.

We will not discriminate against a pupils or staff in absences related to pregnancy and maternity.

Specific provisions for pregnancy and maternity for staff are covered by the BCC adopted Policies – “Maternity and Caring Employee Scheme” and “Teachers Maternity and Adoption Scheme”.

4.5 What do we mean by Race Equality?

The school adopts the definition of Race as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 as one of the protected characteristics which refer to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

The School recognises that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils and staff may experience discrimination on the basis of race, colour, nationality and ethnic origin. This discrimination can manifest itself in all areas of their lives and can have serious consequences in terms of damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities.

The school and governing body does not tolerate any form of race discrimination which it recognises is unacceptable, discriminatory and unlawful, and is proactive in ensuring that people whatever their race, are treated fairly.

4.6 What do we mean by Religion or Belief equality?

A Religion or belief refers to a religious and/or philosophical belief including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). A

religion must be identifiable and have a clear structure or belief system. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their lives or perceives the world (e.g. Humanism).

We recognise that discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief may be experienced in a number of ways, including day-to-day interaction with fellow pupils, staff and visitors.

The school seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and prejudice based on religion and/or belief or non-belief, either direct or indirect, and is committed to treating staff, pupils and others fairly, regardless of their religion or belief and will not condone unfavourable treatment on this basis.

We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to religion or belief and any incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief will be taken seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal or exclusion from the school.

4.7 What do we mean by Sexual Orientation Equality?

The school uses the definition as outlined in legislation as sexual orientation meaning a person's sexual orientation towards:

- persons of the same sex
- persons of the opposite sex, or
- persons of either sex

The School will combat discrimination faced by lesbians, gay and bisexual (LGB) people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGB people across our curriculum provision, services and employment. We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia and challenge stereotyping.

The school recognises the need to protect pupils and staff from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation). We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

5 Achievements and Objectives:

There are 3 Strands of the Equalities Act. This section outlines our Achievements and Objectives for each strand.

5.1 Strand 1: To eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- A school Mission that emphasises respect for others and responsibility.
- Process of recording and reporting racist incidents.
- Online safety lessons across school address and highlight cyber-bullying issues.
- An effective Anti-Bullying Policy, including a child friendly version written with the pupils.
- Anti-bullying lessons delivered in each year group and an annual anti-bullying week, during which external providers such as Unique Voice are often employed to raise the profile of the anti-bullying message within the school.

- A revamped RE curriculum that promotes increased knowledge of the major world faiths and understanding of other cultures and beliefs.
- The Jigsaw PSHE curriculum that challenges discrimination and encourages acceptance and dialogue through activities such as circle time.
- Sex & Relationships Education is taught throughout the school.

OBJECTIVES:

- To introduce and embed the No Outsiders programme across the school
- Continue to monitor incidents of bullying and take appropriate action. We are lucky in that we have had very few incidents of actual bullying in recent years, but we must remain vigilant.
- Review the Mission with the pupils and update and communicate accordingly.

5.2 Strand 2: Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The school has been modified to allow wheelchair access to all areas of the school, including the upstairs classrooms and access to outside.
- Pupils with particular characteristics such as physical disabilities are included in almost all activities, including residential camps and school trips. Staff are trained where necessary to support such pupils and additional staff are provided to accompany such trips.
- Children are also supported through individual and small group interventions including Phonics, Numbers Count and Talk Boost.
- Children with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia are provided with specific resources that support their individual learning. These may include laptops, ipads and dyslexia friendly, coloured exercise books.
- Certain children with specific requirements receive full time 1:1 support from staff trained to meet their needs.
- Ethnic minority pupils and EAL pupils generally achieve at least as well as their white British peers.

OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that all children have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that reflects our school community.
- To ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND fulfil their maximum potential.

5.3 Strand 3: Foster good relations across all characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Our Mission, worked on and produced by all members of the school community promotes learning together and sharing success. One of the 5 key elements of it is the Responsibility strand, which promotes respectfulness, politeness, kindness, helpfulness and awareness.
- Over the years, we have fostered successful links with schools in Nepal, Uganda and India.
- The Unicef Rights Respecting School initiative encouraged a shared understanding of children's rights and responsibilities, and an increased awareness and empathy towards other cultures and beliefs. Our behaviour policy is still based on this initiative.
- We have increased the curriculum time given to geography, ensuring pupils study communities and cultures from a local to global perspective.
- Each class undertakes a COTS (Contribution to Society) activity each year, whereby they raise awareness of a particular issue or concern, and raise money for a charity that addresses it. This fosters empathy and awareness of the challenges that others face.

- Through the curriculum, a wide range of trips are organised to a very wide range of locations in our local, national and even international community – eg local museums, shops, businesses, places of religious worship, historical venues, farms, residential centres and Rue in France.
- We are an active member of the NW24 School Partnership, which involves over 30 Bristol schools working together, both staff and pupils, on strategic priorities and curricular projects.

OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that all pupils are able to access the curriculum
- Develop our new link with a school in Hannover, Germany
- Develop closer links with local schools.

6 Publishing and raising awareness:

We recognise that our Equality, Diversity and Community Policy is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder.

Specific Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, we recognise that from April 2012, as a school, we also have a "specific duty" to:

- Publish sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty every four years, with an action plan review on at least an annual basis.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives in an accessible manner, to meet one or more aims of the general equality duty.

This policy is designed to meet the General and Specific Duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and will be reviewed annually by the School Governors to review and update the plans and objectives contained within. The policy will be available on the school website and available on request from the School Office.

6.1 Links with other school policies

School policies that link with this policy include

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Sex and Relationship Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Maternity and Caring Employees Scheme
- Teachers Maternity Scheme
- Complaints Policy

7 Breaches of the Policy:

Breaches of this Policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teacher and Governing Body. If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the school because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation, they should report this without fail through the School's complaints procedure.

