Northgate Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the Act covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees)
- disability
- race (ethnicity)
- sex (gender)
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to carry out some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties.

These are to:

- publish equality information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions (We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child)
- prepare and publish equality objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following areas:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion (see Community Cohesion Policy).

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.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- recognise and respect diversity
- foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- consult and involve widely
- strive to ensure that society will benefit.

Our Mission Statement

To provide a safe, enjoyable, engaging and stimulating environment where all children and adults are respected, accepted, valued and included; enabling children and adults, to aspire and successfully achieve their full potential.

Our Overall Aims

We aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity through vision, strategy and practice
- involve people from different groups in the development and review of our equality work
- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination
- eliminate harassment and bullying
- ensure equality of opportunity for disadvantaged groups
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes for children
- improve other outcomes where we identify inequality
- take positive action to meet needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment
- increase participation of under-represented groups in activities and public life
- promote positive attitudes and good relations between people from different groups and support community cohesion.

Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by the following principles:

1. **All learners, parents/carers, governors and staff are of equal value.**

   We see all learners and their parents/carers and our governors and staff, 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
- whether or not they are pregnant or mothers
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally 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 of the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

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

We also understand that people have complex, multiple identities. No-one is just one thing and people have many affiliations and loyalties. We know that although social class is not explicitly mentioned in the Equality Act, we need to consider and address inequalities of income and social class as part of our work to address other inequalities.

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, fair treatment for those who are pregnant or mothers, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

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
- whatever their age

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

We use a social model of disadvantage, understanding that disadvantage is often caused by the structures, systems, attitudes and opinions of society as a whole, not by the people that suffer the disadvantage. Therefore, 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, people who are pregnant or mothers and others
- people of different sexual orientation or gender identity

6. We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We recognise that there are risks that consultation processes do not always access the views of some disadvantaged groups. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men, people who are pregnant or mothers
- people of different sexual orientation or gender identity

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
- girls and boys, women and men, people who are pregnant or mothers
- people of different sexual orientation or gender identity

8. We base our practices on sound evidence and openness about the issues that face us

We maintain information where appropriate about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation and gender identity

9. Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published and the engagement through which we have involved people from different groups in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation and gender identity

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

Accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

<u>Ethos and Organisation</u>

We ensure the principles listed in this policy apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support

- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- involvement in extra-curricular activities
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- working with the wider community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice – related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in this policy:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of racial incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School

The Head of School 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.

All staff

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- ensure every child has access to a curriculum that is accessible to them
- work closely together to ensure that all learning tasks are made meaningful and relevant to every learner
- ensure that curriculum content and resources represent and celebrate diversity
- carefully monitor children's attainment and progress to ensure that no identifiable group is underachieving. Attention is given to the progress of identifiable groups of children currently in school, as well as to trends over a number of years
- carefully monitor children's personal, social and emotional development to ensure that children's confidence and self esteem thrive and that every child feels welcomed and sufficiently supported

- deal appropriately with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Governors

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that a policy and its related procedures are created and reviewed regularly.

Religious Observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams, to ensure that we are able to meet our obligations under the Equality Act.

Information and resources

We will ensure that the whole school community is aware of the Equality Policy and our published equality information by publishing it on the school website.

Breaches

Breaches to this statement will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitor and Review

Every year we will review our progress towards meeting our equality objectives. At least every four years, we will review our objectives, taking into account any changes in our school profile and other evidence of need.