

ACOMB FIRST SCHOOL

Single Equalities and Diversity Policy

1. Rationale

Legislation requires schools both to avoid discrimination and to promote equality for pupils, staff and others using school facilities.

Discrimination may occur either directly or indirectly on the grounds of:

Race
Gender
Disability
Religion/belief
Sexual orientation
Age

Direct discrimination is always unlawful: it is when a person is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because of a specified characteristic such as their race, sex or sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally as between people of different groups (for example males and females, or people of different races), but has a different impact on the different groups and so disadvantages some people.

2. Aim

The Single Equalities and Diversity policy ensures that Acomb First School complies with equalities legislation (Appendix 1) and satisfies the Ofsted criteria for making judgements relating to equalities, diversity and inclusive practice.

The aim of this policy is to provide an overall framework for the school's action to:

- Promote equality and eliminate unlawful discrimination for pupils, staff and others using school facilities
- Make it clear that equality and diversity are embedded in all of the school's policies and practices
- Promote community cohesion by creating opportunities for pupils to interact with those from different backgrounds to themselves to enrich their understanding of community and diversity

The primary aim of this policy is to avoid discrimination and to promote equality for pupils, staff and others using school facilities, so that diversity will be recognised as a positive benefit to the community and not as a problem.

The aim will be achieved through equality themes within the following areas:

- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and learning methods
- The curriculum itself
- Assembly themes

3. Commitment to Equalities and Diversity

At Acomb First School we are committed to

- actively tackling discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities;
- encouraging, supporting, and helping all pupils and staff to reach their potential;

- working with parents and guardians, and with the wider community, to tackle all forms of discrimination, and to follow and promote good practice;
- making sure that equality and diversity is truly embedded in all aspects of school life.

The school will ensure that this policy and accompanying documentation are accessible by publishing them electronically in appropriate formats and making them available on request in large print, Braille, on tape and in community languages other than English.

The school will ensure that procedures are in place to consider complaints or concerns. Procedures at Local Authority and school level are in place for dealing with allegations of harassment or discrimination and for recording and reporting racist incidents.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is the enforcement body for equalities legislation and may serve the school with a Compliance Notice if it fails in its specific duties under the Acts. If the school fails to comply within three months of the Compliance Notice the EHRC can ask the courts to order the school to comply.

4. Implementation

The aims will be achieved strategically by aligning an Equalities and Diversity action plan with school priorities identified in the School Development Plan. Equalities targets and actions are therefore embedded in existing school policies and practice, including procedures for regular monitoring and review.

Responsibilities

A. Governing body

The governors are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with the legislation for all members of the school community and
- making sure the Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed.

B. Head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for:

- making available the Equality and Diversity Policy so that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about it;
- making sure the Equality and Diversity Policy is followed; producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on it, if necessary;
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out; and
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

C. All staff

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of age (in relation to employment), disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or transsexual status;
- dealing with incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities.

D. Parents/guardians

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- supporting the school in implementing this policy
- making the school aware of any difficulties they might experience in this area

5. Links to existing school policies and practice

The actions in this policy are based on:

- Our identified priorities
- Pre-existing relevant policies
- Data available to us
- Consultation and involvement of all stakeholders
- The specific context of this school

The above includes:

1. School Development Plan
2. School self evaluation
3. Admissions arrangements
4. Teaching and Learning Policy
5. SEN Policy
6. Statement of Shared Values
7. Child Protection Policy
8. Behaviour Policy
9. Bullying Policy
10. Racial Equality Policy
11. SRE Policy
12. Physical Restraint Policy
13. Appraisal Policy
14. Pay policy

The school as “a small village school serving the village of Acomb and surrounding communities. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups in the school and none who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and / or disabilities is below the national average.”

6. School priorities

Current school priorities are organised into the following sections:

- Curriculum development
- Pupil assessment and tracking
- Devolved leadership

7. Policy statements

Community cohesion

- Awareness and knowledge of the attributes of others will lead to a shared understanding and valuing of diversity in the 21st century

Race

- The learning opportunities planned for the children must be designed to promote the appreciation of ethnic diversity as a positive aspect of 21st century life

Gender

- Traditional Western gender stereotyping must be actively discouraged to ensure that all pupils feel free to make independent choices and decisions

Disability

- We must work towards a situation where all members of the school community with disabilities, special needs and learning difficulties will have complete access to all the facilities, resources and opportunities provided by the school

Age, religion/belief, sexual orientation

- Children will be encouraged to be considerate about the feelings of others in everything they say and do

8. Monitoring and evaluating

The school has a procedure in place for recording, reporting and responding to racist incidents. The school also complies with Local Authority procedures so that information can be analysed. This procedure is outlined fully in the separate document Recording, Reporting and Responding to Racist Incidents: Information for Schools (on www.culturaldiversity.org.uk).

The policy will be monitored and evaluated as part of the school's self evaluation process and will be formally reviewed every three years. Updating of the policy will take account of changes in the law, government policy, Local Authority and school priorities.

The school is required to monitor staff by ethnicity, including:

- staff in post
- applicants for employment, training and promotion

Parents and carers may feedback to the Headteacher at any time.

9. Self-evaluation checklist

- Is information collected with regard to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is pupil achievement monitored by sub group? Are there trends or patterns in the data that might require additional action?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- Are all pupil given the same opportunities to participate in physical activity both in and out of school hours?
- Is bullying monitored and is this information used to make a positive difference?
- Are stereotypes actively challenged in both the classroom and the playground?
- Are pupil encouraged to consider career paths/occupations that are not gender stereotyped?

- Is the school environment as accessible and welcoming as possible to all visitors?
Are open evenings and other events open to parents held in an accessible part of the school?
- Are all parents encouraged to participate in their child's education ie attending parents' evenings, attending school events?
- Is the Governing body representative of the pupils, staff, and local community that it serves?
- Are key employment issues considered – these are typically: recruitment, managing flexible working, managing parental and carer leave, managing pregnancy and return from maternity leave, sexual and/or sexist harassment, transsexual staff, grievance and disciplinary procedures, equal pay, work based training opportunities
- Is an equal pay policy in place?

Appendix : Glossary

Equality is

- about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential – creating a level playing field
- about removing or reducing all forms of unfair discrimination and has been underpinned by legislation
- about breaking down barriers for people in particular groups such as black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, gay men/ lesbians/bisexuals/ transgender people, younger and older people, people from different religious & faith backgrounds, and men and women.

NCC Equality and Diversity Policy 2005

Diversity is

- about including everyone
- valuing differences
- harnessing differences in individuals to the benefit of both the organisation and the individual, by allowing people with different perspectives and views to use their unique blend of skills and character to improve the quality and performance of the organisation
- having a better understanding of the diverse needs of our community

NCC Equality and Diversity Policy 2005

Duty

A mandatory and legal obligation to do something

Promote

Contribute to the progress and growth of....

Make publicity for.....

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Bringing together the Equal Opportunities Commission, Disability Rights Commission and Commission for Race Equality, also serving as a national body for age, religion and belief and sexual discrimination as well as human rights.

Direct discrimination

When a person is *intentionally* treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a special characteristic such as sex, race or disability.

Direct discrimination is unlawful.

Indirect discrimination

When a provision or practice is applied equally to all but *unintentionally* has a different impact on people so that a person or group are at a disadvantage as a result.

Indirect discrimination is unlawful.

Victimisation

When a person is treated less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination eg making a complaint.

Victimisation is unlawful.

Harassment

When a person's dignity is violated or behaviour creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on the grounds of a relevant equalities characteristic eg sex, race.

Harassment is unlawful.

Disabled person

Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
(DDA 2005)

Gender

Two aspects: gender identity is a person's internal perception and experience of their gender; gender role is the way that the person lives in society and interacts with others based on their gender identity

Appendix 5 – Single Equalities Plan

The single equalities plan is attached and can also be found as a separate document in the policies file.

It is drawn from the existing documents within the School Development Plan

- **The calendar overview to coordinate planning cycles / school management**
- **The calendar overview of the School Development Plan itself**
- **Individual action plans arising from identified priorities in the School Development Plan**