



Equality Policy Summer 2015

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Definition

At Avonmore Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnerships, gender reassignment, socio-economic background, pregnant women and women on maternity. (These groups may also be referred to as *protected characteristics (PCs)* and *socio-economic backgrounds (SEBs)* throughout this policy). We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Avonmore Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;





- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, sex, religion or belief, disability and/or socio-economic backgrounds.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Avonmore Primary School.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunity principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.





Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

PCs are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Positive Action

Some people with protected characteristics are disadvantaged or under-pressure in some areas of life, or have a particular need linked to their characteristics. They may need extra help or encouragement if they are to have the same chances as everyone else. The new positive action provisions enable schools to take proportionate steps to help people overcome their disadvantages or to meet their needs.

Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation. The **Equality Act 2010** which replaces the anti-discrimination laws with a single act simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it.

The action plan at the end of this Equality Policy outlines the actions Avonmore Primary School will take to meet the general duties detailed.





Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21 (5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing **a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion**. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils, staff and parents for the range of equality groups and differing socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from pupil survey
- Monitoring and follow up action for any name calling
- Looked at comments from parents survey 2010

We will

- Discussion of policy at staff meeting and Governors meeting
- Gain feedback from the annual parent questionnaire 2011
- Feedback from the whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.
- Introduce policy at Head Teacher's meeting for parents

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, sex, religion or faith and disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on the basis of the PCs and/or SEBs.





- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, sex, religion or belief and/or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, gender, religion or faith and disability.

The role of the headteacher

- It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images of PCs or SEBs where appropriate and challenge stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.





Tackling discrimination

The act refers to protected characteristics these are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Harassment and victimisation on account of PCs is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

For individual definitions of each PC and harassment and victimisation refer to Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know?

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. Parents of the perpetrator and victim are informed and a resolution is sought. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is direct and indirect discriminatory?

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION in services and public functions happens when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).

Direct discrimination can also occur when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic even though that person does not have the characteristics.

Example: A pupil with a parent in a wheelchair is unable to attend the school because there is no step-free access. The pupil is denied parent/teacher contact although the child does not have any of the protected characteristics.

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION happens when there is a rule, a policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people who share a particular protected characteristic.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.





Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person associated with a protected characteristic.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

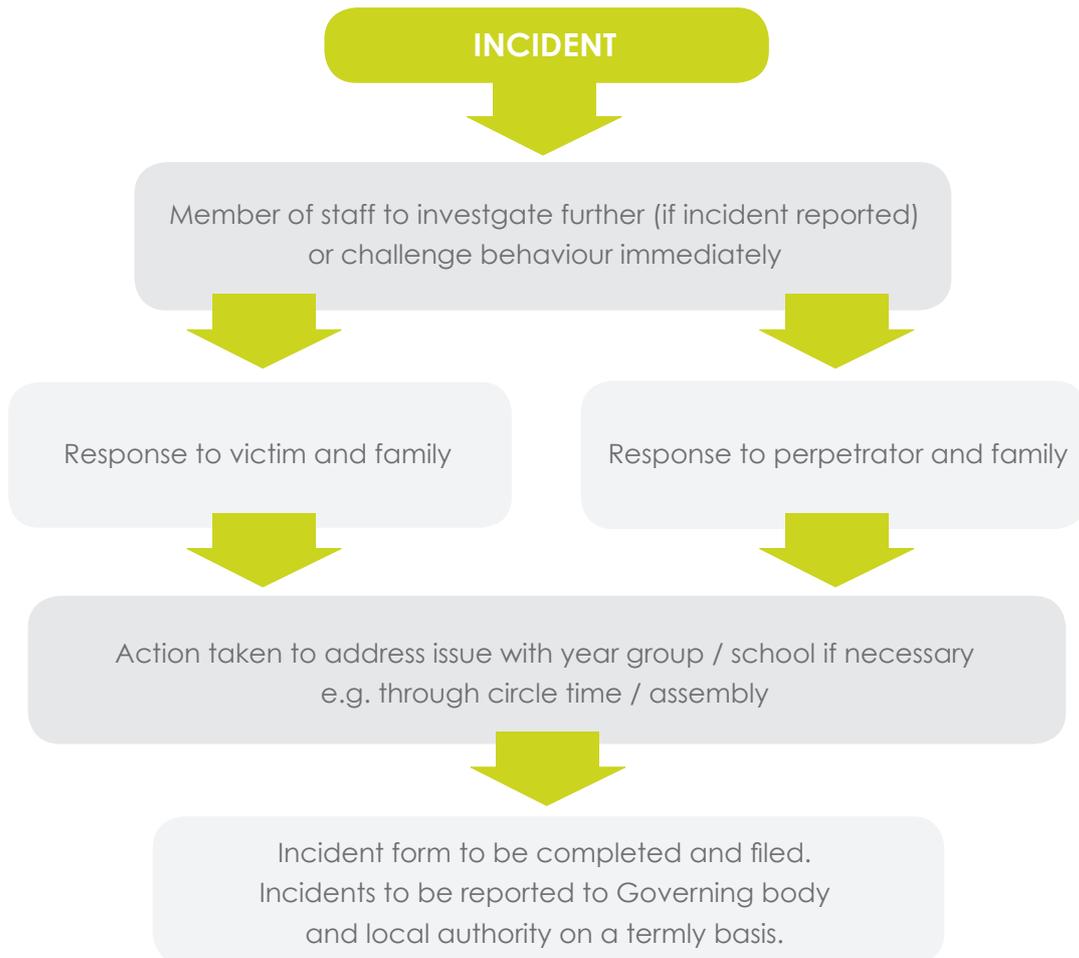
Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.





Procedure for responding and reporting





Review of progress and impact

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan in line with the SDP cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by PCs and SEBs to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish the Equality Scheme, we will:

- Raise awareness of the plan through staff Meetings, Governors' Meetings and on school website when published
- Make sure hard copies are available

