



Kettlethulme St James' CE (VA) Primary School Equality Policy & Equality of Opportunity Policy

March 2017

Policy effective from: March 2017

Review date: March 2020

Senior Leadership & Management Committee

Overview

The Equality Act became law in October 2010. It replaces previous legislation such as the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Sex Discrimination Act and ensures consistency in making the workplace a fair environment which complies with the law.

The Equality Act covers the same groups that were protected by existing equality legislation - age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity - but extends some protections to groups not previously covered, and also strengthens particular aspects of equality law. The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas. The governing body promote respect and equality across all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity, preparing children for life in diverse 21st century Britain.

Introduction

The Governing Body of the school recognises its responsibilities in the employment of staff in the school. In accordance with those responsibilities, it wishes to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all its staff, all those who are applicants to work in the school and those individuals who undertake work on school premises. This policy sets out the principles under which the Governing Body of the school will operate to meet these aims. The policy has been discussed and agreed with all staff representatives. It is available to all staff in the school and to any prospective applicant. The Governing Body welcomes any comments or contributions to the policy document.

Statement of Intent

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the

school. This policy focuses specifically on the employment of staff in the school. The Governing Body recognises the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Governing Body and managers of the school will operate at all times within the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in its staffing decisions. All decisions, including advertising of vacancies, shortlisting, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of school requirements. The only personal characteristics, which will be taken into account, will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of the work involved. There will be no generalised concepts or assumptions about the characteristics of groups. All staff will have a right, through the agreed procedures, to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. Any member of staff who deliberately and knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.

Statutory requirements

The Governing Body is bound by law not to discriminate on certain grounds. The Equality Act 2010 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one and sets out the “protected characteristics” that qualify for protection from discrimination as: -

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex; and
- Sexual orientation

The Governing Body will give sympathetic consideration to requests for time off or for religious observance from staff who are active members of particular religions or beliefs, although such time off will be unpaid and will be considered only subject to the operational requirements of the school. The Governing Body will wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties created by applicants or members of staff who have a disability. The Governing Body acknowledges these areas of regulation and confirms its commitment to enforce these statutory requirements in the school. The over-riding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all governors and staff in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Advertising of vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are exceptional reasons why this should not occur, for example in situations of potential redundancy.



Selection for appointment or promotion

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- i. a detailed job description will be drawn up which accurately describes the duties of the post
- ii. an objective and sufficiently detailed person specification will be defined from the job description
- iii. a job description & person specification will be available to all candidates
- iv. shortlisting will be carried out against the personal specification and a written record retained of the assessment of each candidate
- v. selection decisions will be made against the agreed criteria and no other criteria will be used
- vi. a written record of the selection decision relating to the agreed criteria will be retained
- vii. reasonable adjustments will be made to the recruitment and selection process where necessary to ensure that people with disabilities are enabled to compete for appointments in the school

Specific Issues

i. Age

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on age.

ii. Disability

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions of their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in the school. (Where applicable -- All candidates with disabilities who meet the basic essential criteria for a post will be interviewed.) Where a candidate who has a disability is appointed to a post in the school, reasonable provision will be made for adjustments to the working conditions or environment where this is practicable.

iii. Gender reassignment

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination as a result of a person proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex.

iv. Marital status or civil partnership

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against employees who are married or in a civil partnership.

v. Pregnancy and maternity

The Governing Body is opposed to any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave.

vi. Race

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin. There may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where an occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of someone of one particular race or ethnic origin. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional, and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

vii. Religion or Belief

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on religion or belief.

viii. Sex

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on gender. There may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where a genuine and determining occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of someone of a particular sex. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional, and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

ix. Sexual Orientation

The Governing Body is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation.

x. Harassment or bullying

The Governing Body is opposed to any unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The Governing Body is further opposed to any act of victimisation, harassment or bullying against any member of staff either by an employee or third party based on assumptions about their status in the above categories or any other grounds. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the school's procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

xi. Non-statutory aspects

Although there is no statutory requirement not to discriminate against other groups, or characteristics of staff, the Governing Body wishes to state that it will not in any way discriminate against members of staff or applicants for posts on the grounds of their political affiliation.

Training

The principles outlined above in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Requests for training will be considered in accordance with the school's operational priorities, based on the school's overall development plan and budget allocations. Similarly, the training of the school managers and governors in issues of equality and discrimination, is an essential part of our Equality policy. Where training is scheduled to take place on site, the school will, where possible, adapt the methods of training delivery if current arrangements disadvantage particular individuals or groups of staff.



Positive Action

The Governing Body recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the school. The Governing Body will therefore give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy. This is action designed to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups. The Governing Body will not discriminate in favour of individuals from specific groups (positive discrimination), but it will take positive action which enables members of those groups to compete on an equal basis. Positive action measures may include:

- encouraging applications from specific groups which are under-represented in the school
- encouraging people with disabilities to apply for posts
- advertisements which encourage applications from individuals of a particular sexual orientation, or religion or belief, but make it clear that selection will be on merit
- flexible working – promoting the use of job shares and flexible working where operational factors make this possible
- language/literacy training
- supporting training measure for under-represented groups
- assistance with applications for candidates with language problems
- provision of childcare facilities or support with the costs of childcare facilities for staff
- exploring the possibility of career breaks for women to assist with family commitments
- commitments to interviewing disabled people who meet the basic criteria for the post
- encouraging staff to become representatives of trade unions/associations

Harassment and grievance procedures

Harassment has the effect of destroying dignity and undermining the confidence of employees. It can take many forms including physical contact, bullying, threatening or ignoring someone. It can be a series of offensive remarks or a single incident. It can be behaviour that staff find offensive even if not directed at them or harassment because of perception or association. The Governing Body is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all its staff in the school. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues. The Governing Body will consider any acts of harassment including those on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, as totally unacceptable and outside the ethos and culture of the school. Any such act by a member of staff against any adult or child will be treated as a disciplinary offence, and action taken accordingly. The school has procedures to resolve grievances and for the handling of complaints of harassment and bullying at work. The Governing Body is committed to investigate any such complaint. These procedures will be followed carefully and promptly in response to any such complaint. The first point of contact for any such complaint should be the Head Teacher or if the complaint refers to the Head Teacher then the Chair of Governors. In addition, staff have the right to approach their

professional association or trade union representative for support. Alternatively, the Employee Support Line or Teacherline can also provide appropriate support.

Monitoring the Policy

An Equality policy can only be shown to be effective if its implementation is properly monitored. Given the scope of our policy, this means monitoring both the existing staff of the school and all applications from outside of the school. The school will therefore keep records of existing staff and new applicants which can be analysed to provide data to assess whether this policy is working in practice. The Governing Body will regularly monitor the effectiveness of this policy by the following methods:

- i. The existing workforce will be asked to complete a monitoring form so that data is available on the composition of the staff group.
- ii. All applicants for posts will be asked to complete a monitoring form to enable monitoring of our selection decisions against the principles of this policy.
- iii. All applicants for posts will be invited to indicate whether they have any special requirements or require reasonable adjustments to enable them to submit an application, attend an interview or carry out the duties of that post. Responses to this question and appropriate actions taken by the school to accommodate people with disabilities will also be monitored as part of this process.
- iv. Information arising from this data collection process will be published on an annual basis and will be available to all staff and governors.
- v. Staff and governors will be invited to give feedback from time to time, and to make suggestions for improvements.
- vi. The incidence of complaints under the above procedures and any other aspect of this policy will also be monitored, and figures published on a regular basis.
- vii. The Governing Body will ensure that information is stored in an appropriate and confidential format in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Non-employment aspects of equality

This policy relates only to the employment aspects of the activities of the school. The principles outlined here by the Governing Body of fair and equal treatment apply equally to our approach to pupils and parents of the school and to our dealings with members of the local community and all outside agencies. The school's policy on equality in the curriculum and the treatment of pupils is set out below in the Equal Opportunities policy.



Equal opportunities policy

Introduction

At Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School we value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter.

This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

This policy accords with legislation:

Equality Act (2010) – This legislation harmonises and replaces all nine of the previous anti-discrimination laws and seeks to simplify, strengthen and ensure consistency by bringing together previous legislation into one Act.

Our Commitment

- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all its forms
- We will not discriminate against anyone, in the school community or beyond in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 on the grounds of age, disability, race, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership or pregnancy or maternity, attainment or background.
- We commit to challenging discrimination and aim to provide positive information about different groups of people, including LGBT people, that is non-stereotyping.
- We will promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- We will seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We will constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.
- We will ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We will challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We will value each pupil's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and by ignorance.
- Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we will promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.

- It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We will not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, it will be investigated by the headteacher and reported to the governing body and the local authority.
- We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school. Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

The Role of Governors

In this policy, the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no specific group of pupils is underachieving. To do this, we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case individually and sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The Role of the Headteacher

- It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and s/he is supported by the governing body in so doing.
- It is the headteacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.



- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.
- The headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.
- The headteacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

The Role of the Class teacher

- Class teachers ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.
- When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups or genders.
- We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues.
- All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism.
- We draw incidents of discrimination, prejudice or racism to the attention of the headteacher. The headteacher will record such incidents and report his/her findings as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the headteacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equality Policy. It will be reviewed by the governing body every three years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.