



FARNEY CLOSE SCHOOL

Equality POLICY

Date Published	April 2016
Date Reviewed (V2)	April 2018
Review Due	April 2021

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status.

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups. We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

Rationale

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This School Equality Policy interacts with a range of other school policies that are identified at the end of this policy. We are also committed to responding to all diversity related legislation and feel that a single school equality scheme is the best mechanism for achieving this. The scheme also highlights how the school has worked with and listened to the staff, pupils, parents and carers to inform development of action plans and the need and commitment required to ensure the scheme is a success.

As well as delivering high quality services to its pupils, the school is also committed to being a good employer and as such this scheme outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value.

Therefore, we see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, 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
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the end of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, considering aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

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

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. 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 ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

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:

- Input from staff through staff meetings / INSET;
- Input from parent surveys.
- Feedback from the school forum, PSHE lessons, school surveys on children's attitudes.
- Discussions with pupils and the pupil quality assurance questionnaires and bullying surveys.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

Promoting the policy

In order to meet the statutory requirements we will:

- Publish our School Equality policy and plan on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications; Make sure hard copies are available.

Application of the principles in this policy statement -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 and social development

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 in terms of race, gender and disability, 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, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Exclusions will always be based on the school's Exclusion 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 Farney Close School. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities 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. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and faith or religion 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.

Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Have a school Equality Policy that will be reviewed annually and ensure that it links to the school's policy on Race Equality;
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils;
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Disability Access Plan. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;

- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish a School Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a
- Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years or when legislation requires.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Oppose any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave.
- Promote equality between men and women.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

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 from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy 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, gender and disability.
- 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 governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The governing body is committed to equality for all in appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. The governing body recognise 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, short listing, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on fair assessment of need. The only personal characteristics to be considered will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of work involved.

The Role of the Principal and Senior Managers

The Principal is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

- It is the Principal's role to implement the School Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the School Equality Policy, and that all staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Principal ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Principal 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 Principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff:

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy.

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the School Equality Policy.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges 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 Principal and senior staff.
- Staff will fully support other staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.
- Teach balanced views of other countries and identify similarities to ourselves.

Tackling discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 defines discrimination as treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic, the perception that they have a protected

characteristic, or because of a person's association with someone who has a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination is the unjustifiable application of a provision, criterion or practice, even though it is applied to everyone.

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment. 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 and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to the Principal or other Senior staff where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Principal and racist incidents are reported to the local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment or victimisation on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti. 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 or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic 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 should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

A suggested procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

Procedure for handling incidents of discrimination or victimisation incident

- Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately
- Response to victim
- Response to perpetrator
- Action taken to address issue
- Incident form to be completed and filed.
- Parents et al to be informed

This policy relates to the following school policies:

The Schools Statement of Purpose

All Education and Care policy, practice and programmes of study

Race Equality Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Exclusions Policy

Admissions Policy

Disability Access Plan