



Equalities Policy and Action Plan

STATUTORY POLICY

Agreed by Governors: Spring 20
To be Reviewed: Spring 21

Introduction

This policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (i.e., Race) and Gender. Through this policy Queenswood Primary School and Nursery will fulfil its public duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity, and where appropriate, age (applicable to employees only). The guiding Objectives in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff, and governors in addition to visitors to our school.

This Equality Policy for Queenswood Primary School and Nursery brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 and non-statutory guidance set out by the government in December 2011 and March 2012 as well as other aspects, which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of our local, national and global environments.

Legal framework

Duties as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and its Schedules. There are nine equality strands (known as Protected Characteristics):

- disability;
- ethnicity (including Gypsy and Traveller groups);
- gender;
- gender identity and transgender;
- faith, religion and belief;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sexual orientation (homophobia);
- pregnancy and maternity;
- age.

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, and discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation. As a school we seek to achieve positive action in respect of the Act.

We have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties, and failure to do so could result in legal action against the school's Governing Body. Employees of the school acting on behalf of the Governing Body are also liable for their own discriminatory actions.

Context:

Queenswood Primary School and Nursery is situated on Ketley Bank in the north of Telford. The school serves a community, which faces considerable social and economic challenges.

- Housing in the area tends to be owned by the Housing Association, although there are some privately owned and privately rented properties.
- There are very few professional parents, although quite a large number are employed in the locality.
- Only a **small number** of adults in the main catchment area of the school have undertaken higher education.
- Attainment on entry is below the national average. Children coming into the nursery generally have very poor speech and expressive language and some have little or no speech at all.
- The percentage of children on role with SEN is **24.5%** and **3.77%** have statements.
- **41.5%** claim free school meals. This is increasing annually.
- **21.6%** of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds, **12.2%** of the children have a first language other than English.

Our children experience a range of obstacles to sustained and sustainable engagement in formal learning. They typically experience a poverty of health, housing and transport, and a poverty of experience and aspiration.

Queenswood Primary school and Nursery is mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 5 April 2011, and will publish Equality Objectives from 6 April 2012 and to monitor, and report upon these annually.

Good Practice

We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged in the school.

We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the World communities.

We support 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. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community.

We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the LA. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g., homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs.

Purpose / Equality Objectives:

As a school we have a duty to

- Eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act (2010)
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Set and publish Equality Objectives

Guiding Objectives

In fulfilling the legal obligations and establishing our school ethos, we are guided by 9 Objectives:

Objective 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled,
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status,
- whatever their gender or gender identity,
- whatever their sexual identity.

Objective 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Objective 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
 - ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
 - gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised;
 - sexual identity.

Objective 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

Policies, procedure and activities promote:

- positive attitudes and actions 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, women and men and an absence of sexual, homophobic and transphobic harassment.

Objective 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures 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.

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

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 of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual.

Objective 6: We consult and involve widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. We consultation and involve:

- disabled and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual.

Objective 7: We address prejudice and prejudice related bullying

We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties listed above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudice reflecting sexism, homophobia or transphobia.

Objective 8: Society as a whole should benefit

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 and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people as well as heterosexual

Curriculum

Curriculum information will also be evaluated by looking specifically at equality groups in addition to the standard analysis conducted by the school and adjustments as appropriate to ensure that equality groups are supported positively.

All other data relating to whole school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that groups are supported positively.

When it is reviewed, each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our Guiding Objectives as set out above.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented.

The head teacher 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 are expected to

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Deal with any prejudice-related incident that may occur
- Plan and deliver lessons that reflect the Objectives in paragraph 5 above
- Support pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

All staff and Governors have access to training and a selection of resources which discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion. We value the opportunity to take a holistic approach in fulfilling our Equality Duties.

All staff and Governors will exercise their Safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of Human Rights is addressed immediately.

Religious Observance

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

Breaches of the policy

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other policies are dealt with, as determined by the head teacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.