

MEREWORTH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Equality Policy

(Covers Single equality)

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Person with responsibility	Amanda Lavelle Head Teacher
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Governing Body	FGB
Chair of Governors <i>Signature and Date</i>	
Head Teacher <i>Signature and Date</i>	

Objectives of the Policy

This policy outlines how Mereworth School creates equal opportunities for all and values all members of the school equally. We believe the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups. 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

- All learners are equal
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships
- We foster a shared sense of belonging and cohesion
- We observe good equalities practice for our staff
- We have the highest expectations of our children
- We work to raise standards for all children

Legislation and Guidance

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment or sexual orientation. In order to ensure that all pupils are protected from discrimination, the school collects information on protected characteristics.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in 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.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and outlines two specific duties:

The Public Sector Equality Duty or 'General Duty'

This requires all public organisations including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relationships and positive attitudes between different groups

The Two Specific Duties

This requires all public organisations including schools to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually
- Set and publish at least one or more Equality Objectives that are specific and measurable, at least every four years.

We set, review and update our equality objectives very two years and report annually to the governing body on the progress towards achieving them. We involve representatives from all school stakeholders when reviewing these.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing body will:

- Ensure that the school complies with all relevant legislation
- Ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on the grounds of race, gender or disability
- That the equality information and objectives set in this publication are published and communicated throughout the school and that they are reviewed at least every four years

The equality lead governor is **Elizabeth Earl**. She will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff to discuss any issues and how these are to be addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the content of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full governing body regarding any issues

Head Teacher and Leadership Team will:

- Ensure the policy is implemented and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support. New staff are given training on equality issues as part of their induction and all staff receive refresher training at least annually
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and give equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life
- Take appropriate action in cases of unlawful discrimination

Teaching and Support Staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination

- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's values
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- Support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find academic learning difficult
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

The designated member of staff responsible for equalities, **Kathryn Delaney**, will:

- Support the Head teacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality lead governor to raise and discuss issues

Children, visitors and contractors are expected to have regard to this document.

Eliminating Discrimination

The school is aware of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and where relevant, out policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

We are committed to working for equality for all of our staff, parents/carers and children to meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

We will do this by:

- Following the Equality Policy
- Ensuring the children feel safe at school and address all bullying with reference to the behaviour and Anti bullying policies
- Report, respond and monitor all racist incidents
- Regularly monitor the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all of our children. We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils and ensure that nobody is disadvantaged because of their needs and requirements
- Teaching is of the highest quality to ensure that all children reach their full potential and all children are given equal entitlement to success
- Track the progress of all children to ensure rapid progress and interventions are timely and effective
- We ensure that transgender parents, staff and children are welcomed into our school community and that any discrimination towards them will be challenged
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Using the information we gather to identify underachieving groups or individuals and plan targeted intervention programmes to close any gaps
- Improve high standards, regardless of gender or vulnerable learners, by putting in place additional interventions and utilise Pupil Progress Meetings to track and review all children's learning and progress.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers
- Continuing to review parental engagement opportunities, including new initiatives; Celebration of Learning, Formal Parents consultations (to be offered during the day) and 'Chill and Chat meetings' for parents arranged for every term
- Listening to pupils at all times
- Use a range of teaching strategies to meet the needs of all pupils
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality

Fostering good Relations and Positive Attitudes

The school aims to foster good relationships and positive attitudes between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Ensuring that equality and diversity is embedded across the curriculum and in collective worship
- Preparing our pupils for life in a diverse and society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our learners
- Promoting a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour (for example through our 'Values Based Education')
- Providing pupils with opportunities to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Working with the local community
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. External visitors are invited to contribute and pupils are encouraged to lead assemblies e.g. school council
- Ensuring School Council, Health Ambassadors and Eco Warriors use voting systems and a democratic process for selecting pupils to represent their class

Equal Opportunities for Staff

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 are in compliance with the law.

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 the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school (PASS)
- Issues raised in annual reviews of Statemented children or reviews of progress on Education Health Care Plans (EHCP), mentoring and support
- Feedback at governing body meetings

Equality Objectives

Objective 1: To continue to target gender gaps in academic performance at the end of KS2

Why?

To achieve this we will:

- Identify gender gaps through close monitoring of data on a termly basis in pupil progress meetings

Objective 2: To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experience in school.

Why: It has been recognised through the SMSC teaching that our children lack diversity in a range of cultures and experiences.

To achieve this we will:

- Identify through staff meetings and INSET days how different cultures are currently experienced through our curriculum.
- Plan celebrations and experiences, which occur throughout the year, to enrich the curriculum through events and visitors to school.
- To make this an ongoing objective over a number of years.

Characteristics of our School (October 2019)

(Information taken from Ofsted Primary Inspection data summary report Oct 2019)

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school - current POR 205 with capacity for 218 pupils.
- The school is in a rural village setting, approximately 26% of our pupils live on a large housing development two miles away (Kings Hill) and 10.40% live in Mereworth. Other pupils travel from surrounding villages (Wateringbury, East Peckham & Hadlow)
- There is an above average proportion of boys on the school roll compared to other schools.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for FSM is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority background and the percentage with English as an Additional Language is below average.
- There is a below average proportion of pupils with SEN Support 8.3% (National average 12.6%) and an average proportion with a Statement of SEN or EHC plan 0.5% (National average is 1.6%).
- The stability of the school roll is average.
- The index of deprivation based on pupils' home postcodes is very low compared to other primary schools in the country.
- Data shows that there is variation in the profile of SEN, FSM, EAL and in the boy/girl ratio in the different year groups.
- Attendance is in line with national average (96.8%) for the end of academic year 2018 - 2019.
- EYFS Pupils come into the school from a wide range of pre-school environments (approximately 15) resulting in a wide range of experiences, abilities / social skills on entry to school.
- The school provides extended school provision with a Breakfast Club operating since 2012 and an After-School Club that opened in September 2014.
- The school has a pro-active Collaborative partnership with three local schools; Kings Hill, Discovery, Offham and Ryarsh.
- 5 – 40% of pupils go on to attend Grammar Schools and up to 15 - 20 different Secondary Schools.