

HARRISON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Equal Opportunities Policy/Single Equality Statement

Rationale

Harrison Primary School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality. This Statement responds to the spirit as well as the letter of the Equality Act 2010 which consolidates the legislation contained in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Gender Equality Act 2006 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. It also aims to promote all other forms and strands of equality that are relevant to life in schools.

As such it goes beyond the school's statutory duties to promote race, gender and disability equality and it extends to the legislation protecting against discrimination on the grounds of age, sexuality and religion or belief. Race, gender, disability, sexuality, age and religion/belief are known as the six equality strands.

Our intention is to enable all children to reach their full potential and to ensure equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum by integrating equality into the school's core priorities and functions. However, we recognise that the issue of Equal Opportunities has been developed because of the underlying inequalities that have been present in society in general. This in turn means that, in order to fulfil our aims, we need to take more positive action to counterbalance the inequalities within society and the world at large, and we need to be aware of the ways we ourselves may contribute to those inequalities.

There are many categories in which inequality operates, but we wish to focus on the key categories of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age and religion/belief, with the intention of reviewing and updating this policy on a regular basis.

We aim to:

- create an ethos within which prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping of all kinds can be challenged and eliminated
- increase knowledge and understanding of issues relating to Equal Opportunities
- prepare pupils for life in a multicultural and pluralistic society
- develop a positive and caring attitude towards all people
- promote positive and high expectations
- appreciate the quality of the individual's outcomes.

Our objectives:

Management and organisation. We will ensure:

- that Equality issues inform our school improvement plan
- that all policies take account of the specific ways in which Equal Opportunities apply
- we monitor academic achievement of relevant groups of pupils by analysing performance data.

Ethos. We will ensure that:

- all displays around the site reflect a variety of positive images which are free from stereotyping
- all acts of collective worship are free from messages or language which undermine principles of tolerance or understanding
- all children have access to equipment and areas around the school
- all members of staff uphold the principles of Equal Opportunities in their work with children
- any sanctions used are applied equally
- we understand the ways in which language can be used to stereotype and undermine confidence
- unacceptable behaviour, such as sexist and racist abuse, do not exist
- that publications reflect the commitment to Equal Opportunities and are free from gender or cultural bias
- we provide access throughout the site for wheelchair users and people with other disabilities, as resources allow
- we encourage and develop positive links with the local community
- we extend an equal welcome to all visitors.

Classroom practice and delivery. We will ensure:

- equal access to resources, equipment and toys
- all children are treated equitably by all members of the school community
- equal opportunities for talking and listening exist in whole class discussion, group work and paired work
- an environment in which co-operation is central and in which children will work in a range of grouping context
- that we teach children the skills to resolve conflicts and become self-confident.

Curriculum: We will actively seek to address the issues of Equal Opportunities. We will ensure our curriculum draws on examples from many cultural traditions and will portray Britain as having a diverse cultural background. We will help children explore the idea of 'stereotyping' in order that they can make more informed choices in relation to their identity (i.e. gender, ethnic or cultural background, disability). We will be aware of the balance of male/female roles, disabled/able-bodied and roles from a variety of cultural backgrounds, when choosing historical figures or artists, composers or authors work etc as a focus for a curriculum area.

Appendix 1 – legal requirements and Race Equality Scheme

Legal requirements

This Statement incorporates all of our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Our duties fall into two parts, a General Duty and a Specific Duty. The General Duty applies equally to all schools and other organisations that provide employment, services and goods. For a Specific Duty, we have to show what we are planning to do to meet the General Duty. The General Duty for race equality requires us to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equal opportunities and good relations between people of different racial groups
- ensure that we promote the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity
- reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society
- ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people.

The Specific Duty for race equality requires us to publish a Race Equality Scheme that highlights how the school will:

- make information available and accessible to all groups of parents
- monitor the attainment level of Black and Minority Ethnic pupils (tracking system)
- train staff to understand race equality
- carry out staff ethnic monitoring.

All schools are required to record any racial incidents and report them to the Local Authority regularly. We use the electronic reporting system provided by Children's Services to do this when incidents occur and to provide a termly summary. We will also respond appropriately to any racial incidents that happen in school (link to behaviour and/or bullying policy).

What are the key issues for our school?

As our school is predominately white British we need to be proactive in raising awareness of ethnic minorities in the wider community.

In this context, we aim to tackle racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure; based on the UNCRC 'Rights of the Child', which underpins the ethos of our school
- building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so that they can then use these qualities to influence their own relationships with others
- having consistent expectations of pupils and their learning
- removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve
- ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our schemes of work and lesson planning
- actively tackling racial discrimination and promoting equality
- regular consultation with parents/carers and members of the local community, so that they are well informed of our policy and procedures
- making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and racist behaviour

- identifying clear procedures for dealing quickly with incidents of racist behaviour
- making pupils and staff confident to challenge racist and aggressive behaviour.

The curriculum covers a wide range of opportunities to study places within the local, national and international localities and we aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist behaviour
- 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
- provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that reflect all pupil groupings
- take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils.

The RE policy promotes similarities and differences between Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam creating a sense of acceptance and understanding at an age appropriate level. Provision for children with English as a Second or Foreign Language is co-ordinated by Sarah Thornley, SENCO.

Racial Harassment

Any incident of racial harassment is unacceptable. Any adult witnessing an incident or being informed about an incident must follow these agreed procedures:

- Stop the incident and comfort the pupil who is the victim
- Report the incident to the Executive Head teacher or Head of School.

Policy impact

Regular assessments of pupils' learning are made and this information is used to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. School performance information is compared to national data and Local Authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, a range of other information is monitored as required. This relates to exclusions, incidents of racism, racial harassment and bullying, parental and community involvement.

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups and to set targets in our strategic plan, in order to make the necessary improvements.

Gender Equality

Legal Requirements

This scheme incorporates our duties under the Equalities Act 2006 relating to Gender Equality. Our duties fall into two parts, a General Duty and a Specific Duty. The General Duty applies equally to all schools and other organisations that provide employment, services and goods. For a Specific Duty we have to show what we are planning to do to meet the General.

The General Duty for Gender Equality requires us to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The Specific Duty requires us to publish a Gender Equality Scheme which includes:

- consultation with stakeholders on priorities for gender equality
- carrying out Equality Impact Assessments
- identifying priority areas for gender equality (analysis tracking for each year group to identify any anomalies).

The Gender Equality Duty promotes equality for men, women and transgendered people.

What is gender?

Gender refers to the social construction of female and male identity, rather than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued and used to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. Gender identity is not always fixed and the Gender Equality Duty urges us to have due regard to the needs of transgender people.

What impact have we already had on Gender Equality in our School?

We are an RRR Level 2 school which means we promote equal rights for all children and adults. We promote healthy eating and lifestyle for all, through Healthy Schools Award, Walk to School Week and mixed gender after school clubs. All activities are available to all groups. The teaching of Philosophy for Children in school challenges stereotypical views the children may have been exposed to.

Disability

Legal Requirements

This scheme incorporates our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

The school's duties fall into two parts, a General Duty and a Specific Duty. The General Duty applies equally to all schools and other organisations that provide employment, services and goods. For a Specific Duty we have to show what we are planning to do to meet the General Duty.

The General Duty for disability equality requires us to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers and other users
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote positive attitudes to disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take into account a disabled person's disability even if it means treating the disabled person more favourably.

The Specific Duty states that we must implement the General Duty by publishing a Disability Equality Scheme which involves disabled pupils and other disabled people in all stages of the Scheme.

One of our key goals is to challenge the view that the inequality faced by disabled people is down to their medical 'problems'.

The medical model has fed negative stereotypes held by non-disabled people such as:

- focusing only on what a person cannot do
- making assumptions about what is best for the disabled person
- thinking that disabled people lack intelligence
- feeling embarrassed among disabled people
- bullying and harassing disabled people.

The social model focuses on the social environment and how it causes some people to be disabled through badly designed buildings, hypocrisy, segregated education, poverty and low income, lack of enablers, inaccessible transport, lack of lifts and parking spaces, prejudiced attitudes, poor job prospects, and isolated families.

What is a disability?

Disability is any condition that affects a person in their day to day life. This can happen suddenly, for example as a result of an accident or gradually as a result of a condition such as arthritis.

In the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) this is called impairment. The DDA now recognises around 400 impairments including:

- Mobility impairments (requiring aids such as sticks or wheelchairs to move about)
- Sensory impairments (hearing or sight loss)
- Mental ill health (including depression, stress, Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia)
- Cognitive developmental impairments (including learning disabilities, dyslexia and autism)
- Muscular impairments (including spinal injuries)
- Asthma
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Phobias
- Arthritis
- Acquired brain injuries.

Reasonable adjustments

The school is required to improve access to the curriculum, our buildings and our other services to disabled people. This also means that we need to take a proactive stance and anticipate what we may need in the future for disabled users.

Recruitment and Retention of disabled staff

We welcome a diverse workforce and we wish for an ethos where potential and existing staff, are able to disclose any impairment that they have. This is not just for data collection purposes, but in order for us to make any reasonable adjustments for this member of staff. All disclosures will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Disability and Special Educational Needs

Not all pupils who are defined as disabled will have special educational needs. For example, those with severe asthma or diabetes may not have SEN but may have rights under the DDA. Similarly, not all children with SEN will be defined as having a disability.

What are the key issues for our school? ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Arthritis, Hearing Impairments, Speech and Language, visual impairments, Severe global developmental delay, Diabetes, Severe short term memory impairment.

All children are encouraged to take part in every aspect of school life. Risk assessments include additional measures required to anticipate every child when going on an educational visit and appropriate staff and resources are used to ensure every child's well-being is a priority. All children are invited to attend after-school clubs and members of staff differentiate the tasks and activities to meet the needs of all the children.

Academically all children from Year R to Year 6 are tracked. From Year 1 to Year 6 the children are tracked on a computer program showing current levels of attainment. A full analysis of this then takes place termly.

A few members of staff have disabilities ranging from arthritis, mobility difficulties, asthma or hearing loss. We are aware of staff's health issues and offer support and assistance when needed. If a member of staff is considered vulnerable then a risk assessment is completed & kept in the employee's personal file. **The number of disabled governors is not known at present.**

Members of staff have a good understanding of the disabilities of pupils that they work with and when they know a child is joining their class with a particular disability they endeavour to access training and advice from the SENCO or appropriate Specialist Teachers and the previous class teacher.

Our school has always promoted self-esteem and equality for all.

Sexuality Equality

Legal Requirements

Unlike race, disability and gender there is not a General and Specific Duty for schools to eliminate discrimination against lesbian, gay or bi-sexual people. However, schools have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with in schools under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003), gave all gay, lesbian and bi-sexual employees' rights against discrimination. The Sexual Orientation Regulations (2007) extend these rights to goods and services. This means that we have a legal duty to ensure that people of all sexualities are not discriminated against when they work for us or use our services. We are committed to ensuring that everyone should have equal access to all the services provided by our school and that no one within our school community experiences discrimination due to their sexual orientation.

What are the key issues for our school?

Due to the lack of person identity and understanding of their own culture some families are less tolerant to families and people that are different to themselves. We actively promote good male role models to inspire our children who do not have a positive male in their lives.

Age Equality

Legal Requirements

Unlike race, disability and gender there is not a General and Specific Duty for schools to eliminate age related discrimination.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006), gave people of all age groups rights against discrimination at work, including vocational training. The regulations cover:

- Mandatory retirement
- Discrimination in recruitment, retention and training
- Dismissal and redundancy
- Statutory sick pay and maternity pay/leave
- Harassment in the workplace.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone should have equal access to all the services provided by the school and that no one within our school community experiences age discrimination.

Religion/Belief Equality

Legal Requirements

Unlike race, disability and gender there is not a General or Specific Duty for schools to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of a person's religion or deeply held beliefs.

However, the Employment Equality (Religious Belief) Regulations (2003), gave people of all religious faiths rights against discrimination in the workplace. This does not include people's political beliefs but does include agnostics or atheists.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone should have equal access to all the services provided by the school and that no-one within our school community experiences age discrimination due to their religion or belief.

Community Cohesion

Legal Requirements

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a new duty for schools to promote community cohesion. Although this is no longer a statutory requirement, we believe that the promotion of Community Cohesion is an important element in the continued development of the understanding which underpins equality.

A cohesive community is one in which:

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued
- similar life opportunities are available to all
- strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in schools and our community.

Schools and their communities

Community Cohesion needs to be owned by all organisations and community groups if it is to be effective. Schools belong to many different communities. Our School's communities include:

- the **school community** - our pupils, families, staff, staff governors, users of facilities
- the **local community**-our School in its geographical community and the people who live or work in the area
- the **UK community**-we are by definition part of this
- the **global community**.

What are the key issues for our school?

Opportunities for time to talk to the community members, and time to organise events.

Opportunities to encourage some parents to take part.

Disengagement of some families (the hard to reach groups).

What impact have we already had on community cohesion in our school?

A welcoming environment to all visitors. The EYFS team visit families in their homes, run activities such as 'Songs and Rhymes' to encourage a sense of belonging. Information evenings and events such as the 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' welcome parents to our school community. Parents and members of the wider community are invited to assemblies, drama productions, music concerts, celebrations of RE festivals and work in the school. We have links with the churches & sports representatives from the wider community.

We encourage our children to enjoy being part of their local community through field trips, use of the library, participation in local competitions. We also encourage them to give back to their community through concerts in residential homes and the precinct.

Our Home School Association support community cohesion through ties to the local area and activities such as the Teddy Bear's Picnic, Christmas Fayre, which encourage families to socialise and meet.

Appendix 2 – Published Data

Data will be published through:

Governors' minutes which are in the public domain; published on website;

Governors' Policies which are in the public domain, published on website;

Celebration of specific events through the normal school channels, including newsletters.

Employee Data

This is not required as there are less than 150 employees. However, school procedures ensure that there is compliance with the Act.

Attainment Data

This is monitored through ASP which gives information on the attainment of 'categories of pupils' together with regular reports to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Related Policies: Anti-bullying, Behaviour & Exclusion, Child Protection, Collective Worship, Curriculum, Safeguarding (including Computing Media & On-line Safety and the Acceptable Use of ICT), Special Educational Needs and Disability, Sex Education, Transport to out of school activities, Charging & Remissions, Staff Performance Management, Pay & Conditions for Support Staff, Teachers' Pay, Staff Appointments, Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, Admissions, Attendance Policy and Pupil Premium.

Monitoring Scheme

Equality issues are monitored through Governors' Committees in relation to the ongoing review of the above policies and their implementation.

Activities are celebrated through newsletters

Training

Minutes of meetings show an ongoing development of understanding of matters related to the implementation of the Equality Act¹⁵.

Reference can be made to **Equality Act 2010, Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities** – DFE Guidance, October 2012

Reviewed September 2022

To be reviewed September 2024