



Tweedmouth Community Middle School – Equalities Policy

Introductory notes

Since the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there is no longer a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives.

This model statement has been adapted slightly from one which was developed in Derbyshire in the period 2007-08, and first published in 2009. It has been amended in the light of the Equality Act 2010, and of the specific duties that the Act is likely to entail. There is fuller information about the background in notes at the end.

Legal framework

- 1.** We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.
- 2.** We welcome our duty to promote positive behaviour and safety, and to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- 3.** 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.

Guiding principles

- 4.** In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

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

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

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must

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

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- o positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- o 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
- o mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

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

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- o whether or not they are disabled
- o whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- o whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 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:

- o disabled and non-disabled people

- o people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds o girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 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 consult and involve:

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- o disabled people as well as non-disabled
- o people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds o both women and men, and girls and boys. o Gay people as well as straight.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our 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:

- o disabled people as well as non-disabled o people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds o both women and men, girls and boys o gay people as well as straight.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- o disability
- o ethnicity, religion and culture
- o gender.

Principle 9: Objectives

Each year we formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published, in relation to o disability o ethnicity, religion and culture

- o gender.
5. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.
 6. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
 7. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

- 8.** We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

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Ethos and organisation

- 9.** We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
- o pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
 - o pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
 - o teaching styles and strategies
 - o admissions and attendance
 - o staff recruitment, retention and professional development
 - o care, guidance and support
 - o behaviour, discipline and exclusions
 - o working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
 - o working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

- 10.** The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1-3:
- o prejudices around disability and special educational needs
 - o prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - o prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
- 11.** There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.
- 12.** We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

- 13.** 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.
- 14.** A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
- 15.** The headteacher 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.
- 16.** A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
- 17.** All staff are expected to:
- o promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
 - o deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
 - o plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above

- o support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language o
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

- 18.** We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.
- 19.** All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

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

Staff development and training

- 21.** We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

- 22.** Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and evaluation

- 23.** We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
- 24.** In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

Date approved by the Governing Body:

Source: This model policy was developed in Derbyshire, drawing for some its phrasing from documents developed by other local authorities.

Background and acknowledgements

- 1.** As mentioned in the introductory note on page 1, this model statement is adapted from one originally produced in Derbyshire.
- 2.** In its overall framework the Derbyshire policy on equalities in education is based on the race equality policy that it developed in response to the Race Relations Act 2000, and that was included in *Here, There and Everywhere: belonging, identity and equality in schools* published by Trentham Books in 2004.

3. The list of principles at paragraph 4 is adapted from material in Equality Impact Assessments: a workbook, published by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families in December 2007, and revised in November 2010.
4. The model statement takes into account guidance issued by other local authorities. These include Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dudley, Durham, Hertfordshire, Newcastle and Sheffield.

Features of the model

5. The model contains the following features.
 - The term ethnicity is used in preference to race or racial group, on the grounds that it better reflects the intentions and concerns of race relations legislation.
 - There are references where appropriate to religious affiliation and identity.
 - There are references where appropriate to sexual identity and to challenging homophobia.
 - Disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexuality are referred to in alphabetical order, not in the order in which legislation requiring equality schemes and policies was introduced.

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. Age and sex:

Pupils who spend time in detention, pupil voice representatives and posts of responsibility are, where possible, represented by equal numbers of boys and girls. The only exception to this is the role of peer mentor, which is a voluntary activity and has more female than male representatives.

We currently have a large Y8 (4 form classes/sets). Staffing has been adjusted accordingly.

In 2015 the school profile was 43.4% girls, compared with 49.7% nationally. Data show that some boys, in particular the more able, sometimes underachieve. It has been a priority for us to work with these boys to offer nurture groups and work with our locality LIST team to develop interventions to support their progress. (Source SIMS, First School Profile, Northumberland Data Unit)

Disability

The school has a vigilant approach to introducing interventions for SEND pupils. Identifying and addressing additional needs through effective early interventions reduces the numbers of SEN and statemented pupils in older year groups.

The ability and SEND profile of the all year group triggers a number of interventions (1:1 tuition, nurture groups, lunchtime club, SATS preparation) and these initiatives will remain in place during the time that we have this year group in school.

An accessibility plan is in place, and is reviewed. We intend to set up a pupil review group to survey current provision and feed recommendations into a new plan – this will be overseen by the Health and Safety Committee of the Governing Body. The school site has stairs on corridors which pose accessibility challenges. Some adaptations have been made to the building to improve accessibility. These include: a disabled toilet and accessible door at the rear of the building. Staff have met the needs of hearing and visually impaired pupils in the past. The school's home-school links are maintained effectively by a designated Pupil Welfare Officer. There are >10 disabled children in school. The school has a policy for the administration of medicines by staff. Staff have undertaken paediatric first aid training which included the administration of Epipens for treating anaphylactic shock. (Northumberland Data Unit, Staff profile and CPD history, SEN register)

Sexual orientation, Gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership.

No data is recorded about the sexual orientation of staff or carers. Due to the fragmentation of many parenting relationships, the school adjusts the language used to address home circumstances. Our school is sensitive to single parenting circumstances, bereaved pupils, or those who may live in single sex households and we ensure equality for these pupils. The school corresponds with estranged parents by contacting each one separately as appropriate, making additional, separate parental appointments if requested (legal constraints permitting).

Race

The school has a population of 6.7% BME or dual heritage pupils, and 93.3% White British. The latter population has decreased over the last 3 years. The heritage language spoken by most of the children in school is English, and the community first languages represented are Bengali, Latvian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Polish, Portuguese and German. This reflects the rapidly changing cultural diversity of Berwick. There are no significant patterns of underachievement for BME pupils who attend the school, as the data is insufficient to draw any conclusion. Staff demonstrate cultural sensitivity towards minority ethnic or dual heritage pupils and their traditions and cultural taboos. This is discussed at transition or induction. The school acknowledges that children have fewer opportunities than those in other parts of the UK to encounter the culture, ethnic and religious diversity of communities and urban locations that constitute 'Britishness' in a wider context. We are aware of this need to teach and learn about the wider contexts of the UK and world, and incorporate themes of commonality and difference into our curriculum and assembly programme. We are vigilant in recording and reporting racist incidents to the Local Authority. There is a small amount of pupil absence connected to heritage and migration, which has the potential to negatively impact on the school's absence data. A Show Racism the Red Card Workshop are planned annually to offer pupils an opportunity to explore further the issues of identity based around bullying, sensitive and acceptable language, and challenging discriminatory practice. (Source: SIMS, Raise Online, School census October 2015, school data profile, Partnership data profile, Annual report to governors, curriculum planning)

Religion and belief

The school collects data about religious belief on our data collection form for new admissions.

No parents express a desire to withdraw their child due to any of the statutory themes regarding RE and corporate worship, although we are aware of and respond to parental preferences pertaining to religion or belief.

We would normally authorise time off for children who celebrate the cultural and religious festivals that correspond to their heritage and identity, but remain aligned to LA and Partnership agreements.

We respond sensitively to requests that school uniform conventions be adapted for cultural or religious reasons.

(SIMS, anecdotal)

Pregnancy and maternity

The school gives staff with parenting roles scope to make flexible arrangements regarding emergencies or milestones relating to children, childcare and parenting.

The school has a leave of absence policy which we apply.

(Staff policies)

FSM and IDACI

The school's 2015 IDACI scores are marginally below national average, placing us between the 40th and 60th percentiles. We try to minimise the impact of inequalities due to socio economic disadvantage with regard to learning visits, uniform and any other out of pocket expenses that might make this inequality visible.

In 2014/15 35.9% of our pupils were recorded as qualifying for FSM / PP measure, compared with a national average of 28.7%. The pupil premium is applied to offer small group interventions for our most vulnerable (FSM, LAC, SEND) pupils. It is also used to subsidise the cost of learning visits, residentials, instrumental tuition, two week summer school, breakfast club. A full breakdown is available on our school website. <http://www.tweedmouth.schooljotter2.com/our-school/ofsted-info/pupilpremium>.

(Sources: Partnership and school data profiles 2015, Raise Online)

Vulnerable groups

We currently have 1 Looked After Child on roll.

We track the progress of all vulnerable groups of children, including by sex, FSM, EAL, BME, LAC, PLAC (privately looked after), SEND.

(First school profile, Partnership profile, SIMS tracker)

Equality objectives

The equality objectives have emerged from the most significant equalities challenges we have identified in defining our equality information.

We will report regularly upon progress against these over the four-year period they cover.

Objectives

1. The school will adopt and update the staff monitoring form of protected characteristics used by the County Council. We will keep the data confidentially. This will give a full picture of protected characteristics within the staff, and enable us to keep equalities at the heart of every decision we make.
2. The initiative to maintain and support the progress of the boys will continue, and in addition to academically focussed interventions, support mechanisms will include work on self-esteem and positive attitudes to school. The progress of boys will be carefully monitored to ensure that they make at least expected levels of progress.
3. We will have a focus on challenging and recording any instances of homophobic language, using the new recording form, and will report annually on the effectiveness of this strategy in eliminating the problem on the few occasions that it arises, and on the pupils' perceptions of the implications of using potentially discriminatory language. Where trends and patterns emerge, we will develop interventions and learning activities for all pupils.
4. We will monitor the participation of all of our vulnerable groups of children in clubs, extra-curricular activities and positions of responsibility. If patterns of underrepresentation emerge, we will explore barriers and make any reasonable adjustments we can to increase this participation.

Intended Audience: Parents/Staff/Governors

Date Adopted: Autumn 2012

By Whom: Policy Committee

Date last Reviewed: September 2015

By Whom: Headteacher pending policy committee