

Equality Statement of Principles

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, victimisation and harassment of 'protected characteristics'. For schools, this means that it is unlawful to discriminate against pupils due to: gender, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership and age.

The following statement reflects our commitment at St Bede's Primary to ensure that pupils, their families, staff and the wider community are not unlawfully discriminated against.

Legal framework

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), sex, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and more recent directives to teach about character and values in our curriculum.

We recognise these duties are essential, and that they 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

In fulfilling our legal obligations we are guided by principles:

All learners are of equal value

At St Bede's Primary we see all learners, potential learners and their parents /carers of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religion or belief, national origin or socio-economic circumstance
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their sexual orientation

We recognise and respect difference and diversity

At St Bede's Primary we believe that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but are differentiated to take into account the differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments can be made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background, or having no religious beliefs

- Gender and sexual orientation so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised
- Age

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

At St Bede's Primary we intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes 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 harassment

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

At St Bede's Primary we ensure that our policies and procedures should 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, religion / belief, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender, gender identification and sexual orientation
- Whatever their age
- With full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

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,
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds,
- Girls and boys, women and men,
- People of different sexual orientation
- People whatever their age (where appropriate)
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds

We consult widely

At St Bede's Primary we recognise the importance of consulting with people who are affected by a policy and involve them in the design of new policies and the reviewing of existing ones. Wherever possible and/or deemed appropriate we will strive to involve:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People from the ethnic, cultural and religious and socio-economic backgrounds that make up our community
- Both women and men, and girls and boys
- People of all sexual orientations
- People from different age groups

Pupils, their families and the wider community as a whole should benefit

At St Bede's Primary we believe that our policies and activities should benefit both our local and wider community as a whole, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life. Our policies seek to respect and include:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled,
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- People of all sexual orientations
- Gender variant people
- People of different ages.

We base our practices on sound evidence

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

- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender

Data

Each year we formulate and publish data we have collected in relation to:

- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender
- Disadvantage

The Curriculum

At St Bede's Primary we keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.

Ethos and organisation

At St Bede's Primary we ensure that the aforementioned principles apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement

- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Admissions and attendance
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community
- Safeguarding children in education

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Here at St Bede's Primary we are opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to earlier:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- Prejudice which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism

There is clear guidance provided by Northumberland County Council for staff defining how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously the expectation that we will report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of race-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with. We also draw on the support of Northumbria Police and partner organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card.

Roles and responsibilities

Within St Bede's Primary:

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.

A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

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.

All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom,
- Challenge any prejudice-related incidents that may occur,
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the aforementioned principles,

- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language,
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

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.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources and training which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

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

At St Bede's Primary 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

Any 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

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

In particular we use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, language, disadvantage and gender.

This policy is in conjunction with our:

- Safeguarding
- Child Protection
- Anti-bullying
- Pupil/parent questionnaire information