

Growth through Understanding

Thomas Bewick School Equality Policy 2015-17

National and Legal Context

Thomas Bewick School recognises that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010, and subsequent amendments, in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status.

We recognise that we also have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

Statement of Intent

At Thomas Bewick School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, governors connected to the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together with common goals.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At Thomas Bewick School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all.

Our School Context

All pupils at Thomas Bewick have autism which is a life long disability: some pupils have more severe autism than others and have very limited or no verbal language. We have an increasing number of pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Pupils attend our school from all areas of the city of Newcastle. Our staff are predominantly

female. There are a wide spread of ages. A small number are of nationalities other than British.

Rationale

Our Equality Policy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including Race, Gender and Disability.

The Equality Policy includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 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 cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies and is built upon active engagement with them.

Objectives

1. To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
2. To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
3. To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.
4. To recognise and celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion.
5. To ensure that this policy is applied to all we do.
6. To ensure that pupils and parents are fully involved in the provision made by the school.

We will endeavour:

- to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching
- to provide our pupils with self esteem and confidence which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of gender or stereotypes.
- to provide all pupils and staff with opportunities to develop tolerance, respect understanding and empathy to live in a diverse environment and challenge stereotypes.
- to ensure equal treatment of employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality.
- We value our fundamental similarities and universality while valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere.
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Our vision statement about Equality

Thomas Bewick School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully, and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning.

We will strive to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met.

We recognise that we cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create a cohesive community.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have ensured that they are recognised and embedded in all aspects of school development to ensure better outcomes for all. We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum – including school sports, interaction with peers
- classroom organisation – including timetabling, grouping of pupils
- access to school facilities
- preparation for entry to the school/preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- recruitment of staff/staff well-being/staff professional development

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- 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;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

As an employer

We recognise that our Equality duty underpins every aspect of employment including

- recruitment and selection
- pay policy
- grievance procedures
- disciplinary procedures
- harassment procedures

- staff development and training
- school improvement/development plan
- performance management

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Governors will ensure that the school's public sector duty is carried out in relation to :

1. their statutory duty to protect from discrimination is carried out with regard to the 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection :
 - a. Age
 - b. Disability
 - c. Gender reassignment
 - d. Marriage and civil partnership
 - e. Pregnancy and maternity
 - f. Race
 - g. Religion or belief
 - h. Sex; and
 - i. Sexual orientation
2. the need to advance equality of opportunity between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. foster good relations between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy and actions to meet our duty
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- ensure that all employment policies are implemented fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights and our equality duty
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues

Our pupils will:

- be encouraged to develop attitudes and behaviour in line with the principles of our policy appropriate to their level of understanding

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the policy

- have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our staff will:

- be involved in the development of the policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

Thomas Bewick School Equalities Plan

This plan brings together actions from the following existing, and former, policies and action plans

Community cohesion
 Disability
 Accessibility
 Racial Equality

Notable recent achievements in these areas have been:

- School's focus on sharing best practice to improve outcomes for all pupils at the school
- Pupils benefitting from increasing our multi-cultural events and celebrations, as well as our international links through the Erasmus+ project
- Developing older more able students' awareness of disability in general and helping them to recognise their own additional needs.
- Ensuring we consult with parents and staff on their needs and that we act on their feedback.
- Strengthening our relationship with the local community to foster greater understanding of autism and the needs of the pupils.
- Undertaking an accessibility audit of the school building with disabled pupils, some in wheelchairs, from Sir Charles Parson's School.

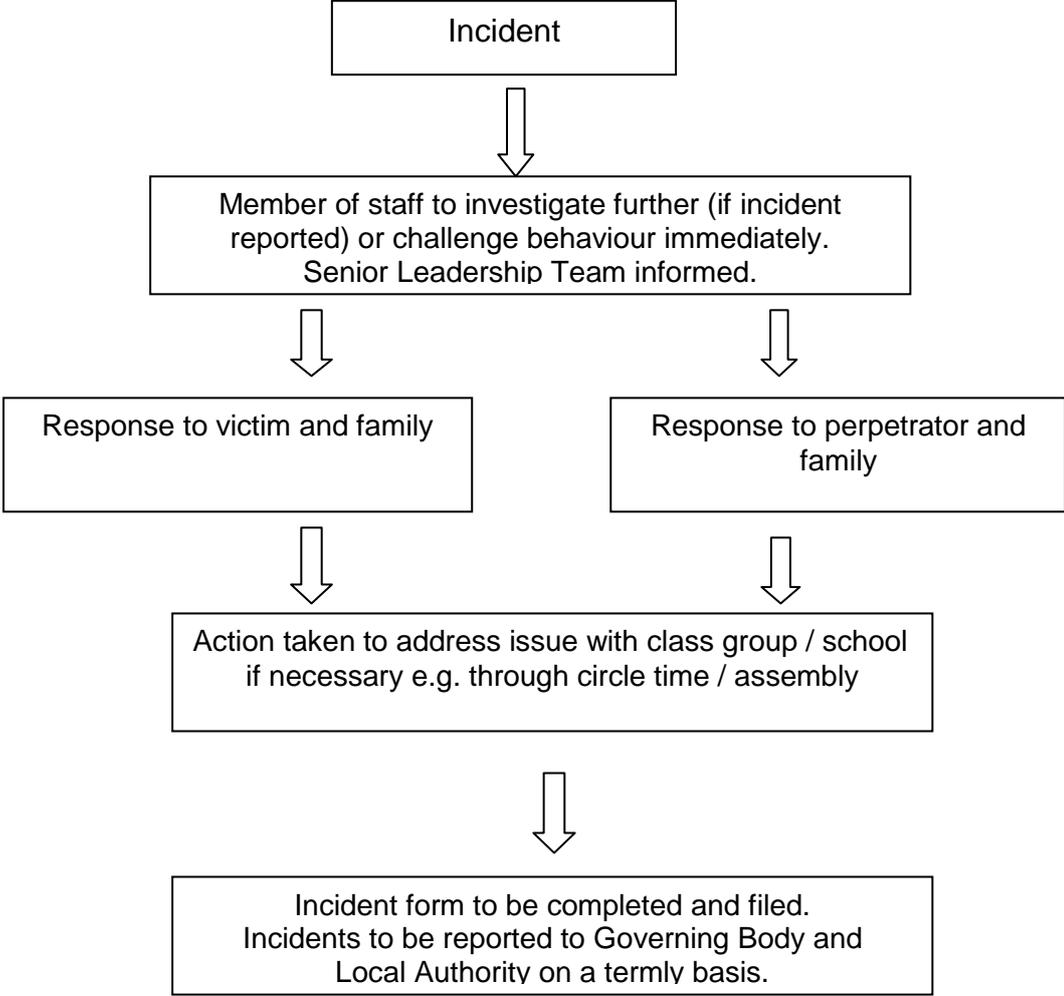
Current Objectives: to be agreed by SLT and Governors.

- To monitor equality of opportunity across the school to ensure that pupils of different abilities receive high quality learning opportunities appropriate to their needs.
- To monitor the different ways we reach parents and carers and follow up actions required to ensure that we try to overcome any barriers that may exist.
- To involve our stakeholder groups in further developments of our equality policy through consultation and engagement

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

A suggested procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



Monitoring and review of Policy and Plan

We will review the Equality Policy and Plan on an annual basis with Governors and stakeholders. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any

Publishing the Plan

We will publish our school Equality Policy and Plan on the school website.

We will raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We will make sure hard copies are available in school.

Revision Record of Published Versions			
Author	Creation Date	Version	Status
A Lindley	Jun 2014	1.0	Approved by governors
Amended by	Revision Date		
J McCreery	Sep 2015	1.1	Approved by Premises Committee 09/11/15

Action Plan

The duty to report racist incidents and the publication of the Equality Plan to meet the Disability and Gender Equality legislation is included in the action plan below.

Equality Strand	Action	How will we monitor impact?	Who is responsible for implementation?	Timeframe	Success Indicators
All	Equality plan published and available on school website. Mentioned in newsletter. Staff reminded at briefing	Question about parent awareness of Equality Plan in annual survey	Head Teacher SLT	Summer 2015	Staff are familiar with the principles of the Equality Plan and use them when planning lessons, creating displays. Parents are aware of the Equality Plan
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.	Achievement data analysed as stated	Head Teacher/SLT Governing Body	Annually in September	Analysis of teacher assessments/annual data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups.
All	Ensure that curriculum promotes role models that young people positively identify with, which reflects the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability.	Increase in pupils' participation, confidence and achievement levels	SLT Whole staff	Ongoing	Notable increase in participation and confidence of targeted groups.
All	Ensure that displays in classrooms and across school promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity.	Increase in pupil participation, confidence and positive identity – monitor through PSHE	Headteacher SLT	Ongoing	More diversity reflected in school displays
All	Ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School	School Council representation monitored by race, gender, disability	DHT Secondary	Ongoing	Maintain diversity in school council membership.

	Council, class assemblies, fund raising etc				
Race Equality Duty	Identify, respond and report racist incidents as outlined in the policy. Report the figures to the Governing Body and LA on a termly basis	Head Teacher and Governing Body will use the data to assess the impact of the school's response to any such incidents.	Head Teacher Governing Body	Ongoing	Teaching staff are aware of and respond to racist incident.
Race	Enhance parental engagement with the school's EAL community	The Head Teacher/SLT and Admin Team will further utilise the interpreting services of the LA to engage with EAL community	Head Teacher Governing Body	Ongoing	Higher attendance at Annual Reviews, Parents' Evening etc Increased response to school questionnaires and pro-formas
All	Celebrate cultural events throughout the year to increase pupil awareness and understanding of different communities.	PSHE Assessments	PSHE Co-ordinator	Ongoing	Increased awareness of different communities shown in PSHE assessments
Disability	Enhance access to school facilities as highlighted in Accessibility Plan where practicable and required	Review of Accessibility plan	SBM	Ongoing	Improved access to the school facilities to all stakeholders