



St Monica Primary School

Equality and Access (whole school) Policy

Policy Statement and Guidelines

Policy Date: April 2016

WHOLE SCHOOL EQUALITY AND ACCESS POLICY		Signed by the Chair of Governors:
Date of Issue:	April 2016	
Approved by Governing Body:	April 2016	
Review Date:	Summer 2019	

Introduction

St Monica Primary School is an inclusive school, where all staff and governors focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our school community are of equal worth.

The Equality Act provides a robust framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between all members of our school community. It also ensures that we continue to make early identification of issues regarding disadvantage and underachievement of different identified groups.

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. Our commitment to ensuring equality of access to the school environment is detailed in our school Local Offer, which has been submitted to the Local Authority and is reviewed annually.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value.

Whether or not they have SEN, are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.

We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn and teach within our school and those who visit.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.

We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We strive to ensure all members of our school community feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community, and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.

We ensure that all related policies and procedures benefit and support all employees and potential employees, within all aspects of their work, including with regards to recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations and aspirations for all our pupils.

We expect that all pupils will make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.

We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the policy

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, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and 'Two Specific Duties',

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 relations between different groups

Two "specific duties":

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty (by April 6th 2012).
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations.

Development of the policy

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted Inspection Framework 2015, which place a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those who are supported by pupil premium funding. Analysis of data tracks progress towards closing the attainment gap.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our Raising Attainment Plan, Self Evaluation Summary, the School Prospectus and school web site.

There are also references in the Behaviour, Admissions, SEN and Anti-bullying policies. The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this is found in our Recruitment Policy.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, this includes the way we provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils and the way we provide access for all pupils to the full range of facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment Duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to match the level of non-disabled pupils and prevent disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the school.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school Policy on Behaviour - Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions - takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability.

We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief (for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia)
- prejudices around travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

There is guidance in the staff handbook to ensure no employee is discriminated against. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement.
- We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.
- There is a clear distinction between pupils who have English as an additional language and pupils who have identified Special Education Needs & Disability.

We collect, analyse and publish data:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English
- we also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance

Nationally reported data provides an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

White British FSM and non-FSM

Bangladeshi

Black African

Children Looked After

Congolese

Somali

Black Caribbean

EAL

All SEN

SEN Support and EHCP

Pupils receiving Pupil Premium Grant

Known GRT

Refugee

- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Hearing impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller pupil joins our school.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender and disability.
- In addition to avoiding or minimising any possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:
 - disabled and non-disabled people
 - people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
 - girls and boys
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- The Governing Body closely monitor the effective implementation of the Whole School Equality & Access Policy.

Positive Action

We will take prompt, positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics. Actions such as targeted support to meet individual needs, deployment of additional staff and requests for support from Outside Agencies, will ensure school's key Equality Objectives are met.

What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, local community and general population in terms of race, gender and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

Other ways we address equality issues

- We maintain records of all training relating to Equality Issues.
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well being of our pupils. New policies and practices consider implications regarding Equality.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires and parents.
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons,
- ensure that we share responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups.

We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This is part of our Raising Attainment Plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult all stakeholders, including staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

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 with responsibility for Equalities has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality & Access Policy and standards achieved by different groups are reported to them.

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
- * for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination
- * logging all racist incidents

A senior member of staff (SENCo) has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. She will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act. Training and Guidance on EAL will be provided for all teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.

Teaching and Support Staff

All 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 curriculum and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations and aspirations for the success for all pupils
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work
- report all racist incidents to member of SLT

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year. Staff will receive a certificate of attendance.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Equal Opportunities for staff

- This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to 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 in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- 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.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives is available

- on the school website
- on request as paper copies in the school office
- as part of induction for new staff

By publishing the Whole School Equality & Access Policy on our school website we ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy and its objectives.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

St Monica Primary School Equality and Access Policy was drafted and amended following consultation with staff, governors, children and parents/carers April 2016.

Key contacts

Staff responsible for Equalities: Mrs J. Puckett

Lead Governor: Mr S. Bonney

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training.
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders.
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties.
- The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality & Access Policy.
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality & Access Policy.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the School Council.
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern.
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community.
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies.
- The school environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school – (refer to school Local Offer).
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered.
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information.
- The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves. Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.