Oakthorpe Primary School
Equalities Policy
February 2017

This policy has been drawn up with reference to Camden LA model equalities policy

At Oakthorpe Primary School we are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all regardless of class, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, family make-up, belief (religious or non-religious), or any other individual special need

Introduction

Oakthorpe is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different 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 approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

1. All learners are of equal value, whether or not they 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand and promote the idea 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, and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
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 want all members of our school community to 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 policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can 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);

- sex (gender)
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation or
- pregnancy/maternity
- age
- marriage/civil partnership

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

The 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

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. 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
Appendix 2 shows the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of prejudiced nature Oakthorpe's Equality Objectives in our Equality Action Plan

Development of the policy

This policy was developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers. It is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and providing an inclusive school.

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework which places 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 and those who have special educational needs.

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, please also refer to our Accessibility Plan, Equalities Information and Action Plan, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

There are also references in the pupil premium, behaviour, admissions, Looked After Children, SEN and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and we comply with this in our recruitment procedures.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop 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 to day life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements, set by the Local Authority, are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, family make-up, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school Policy on Behaviour 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 and culture, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes
- prejudices around home circumstances

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

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 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.

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
- 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, eligibility for FSM

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

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 or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able". Instead, we use the terms higher attainer, middle attainer and lower attainer.

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 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, 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.

We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan designed to:

- increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum
- improve the physical environment
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

- Through our curriculum we prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils
- We promote our school values which include diversity and individuality, tolerance, respect, politeness and forgiveness
- We teach about difference and diversityand 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, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity 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 eg: Oakthorpe Heritage Day and Black History Month
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences eg: Debating
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events eg: Awareness weeks
- We include Equalities matters in our newsletters to parents

Other ways we address equality issues

- We maintain records of all training relating the Equalities
- Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed
- 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
- The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced

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 the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum and/or focus meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting
- 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;
- analyse issues raised in our Annual Review and reviews of pupil progress
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan)

- 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 Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives

- We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives

- Our Accessibility Plan shows our objectives for increasing the participation of disabled pupils, improving our physical environment for disabled pupils and improving the access to information for disabled pupils.

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

- 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.

Governing body

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.

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 review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative and qualitative evidence

Headteacher and Leadership team

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.

A senior member of staff who has good knowledge of the act, has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff All

teaching and support staff:

- 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 curricula 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 of 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.

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

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

Key contacts
Staff: Deputy Headteacher and SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) Lead
governor: Chair of Governors

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 members of staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups orteams.

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 and Accessibility Plan are available:

- on the school website
- on the school staff computer network
- as paper copies in the school office
- as part of induction for new staff
- as a summary in the school brochure

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish relevant policies and guidance including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs on our website

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 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 Policy
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- We promote our school values which include diversity and individuality, tolerance, respect, politeness and forgiveness, in assemblies, in lessons, through modelling appropriate behaviour and newsletters.
- 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 takes part in annual events such as Black History Month, Paralympics and Heritage Day etc. to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender
- The school environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school
- Parent Evenings and other events which parents 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 representative of the community it serves as far as possible
- Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled

APPENDIX TWO: Procedure for dealing with prejudice related incidents

A prejudiced related incident is any incident which is perceived as such by the victim or any other person, regarding a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

The school opposes all forms of such behaviour and ensures that if these incidents occur, they are dealt with thoroughly.

- The teacher/adult present at the time should immediately offer support to victim and express disapproval to the perpetrator(s)
- As soon as is convenient, the teacher/adult shall discuss with all present, the meaning, seriousness and hurtfulness of such of behaviour

- The incident shall then be logged in the Incident/Discrimination Log, which shall be advised to the perpetrator(s).
- Incidents will be monitored by the senior management team and appropriate action taken
- As with any other persistent and unacceptable forms of behaviour the SLT usually involves parents in further discussion
- Governors are advised of patterns and trends of unacceptable behaviour each term

Unacceptable behaviour may incur the following consequences:-

- Parents involved
- Targets set
- Meeting with Governors' representative
- Fixed term Exclusion