ROKESLY INFANTS SCHOOL

Equalities Policy

Ratified: February 2024

Review Date: February 2025

Aims

At Rokesly Infant and Nursery School we aim to meet our obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the Equality Act 2010.

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.

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years

- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives to the Head teacher

The equality link governor will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every termly, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed

- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document

- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training

- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues

The Head teacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils

- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

Legislation and guidance

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics. This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), age, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

The Equality Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Our Ethos

1. We value all learners equally, and as individuals, whether or not they have a disability, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation and regardless of their faith background, religious or non-religious affiliation or their socio- economic background or family circumstances.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength. We believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who visit, learn and teach here.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between individuals, 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 equally 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 pupils. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

7. We will do our utmost to protect the rights of all our pupils. We believe all children should have equal access to human rights and that each and every child deserves our protection and to receive the best possible education we can provide.

Promoting Equality

We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

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.

All appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or promotion.

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. Discrimination or harassment of anyone in our employment will not be tolerated.

Meeting Specific Needs

Due regard is paid to 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. Reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with disabilities will be made as needed. See: School Accessibility Plan and SEND Policy

- Through pupil admissions meetings and other procedures, work in partnership with parents and carers to identify children who have a disability and take action to meet their needs.

• Enable equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Eliminating Discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with nondiscrimination provisions. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct. E.g. our Anti-Bullying Policy addresses prejudicial bullying with clear procedures for reporting, responding to and monitoring all racist and discrimination based incidents and bullying.

• Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.

• New staff are required to read this policy as part of induction, and all staff receive refresher training.

• The school curriculum is regularly monitored by senior leaders and governors to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils and that it promotes respect for diversity and challenges negative stereotyping.

• Children's progress and attainment is tracked each term to ensure that all children make good progress, and support is required it is put in place.

• Ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to access extra-curricular provision through reserving spaces for children where a need has been identified.

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

• Listening to and monitoring views and experiences of pupils and adults to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and procedures

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

• Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)

• Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic

• Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

• Provide governors with attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing

• Analyse this data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information e.g. School Improvement Plan / PPG statements

• Make evidence available that identifies improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or sexist bullying)

Fostering Good Relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting acceptance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.

- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.

- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.

- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

- Preparing our pupils for life in a diverse society and promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

- Teaching about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through assemblies and the curriculum.

- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

- Including the contributions of different cultures to world history in the curriculum and promoting positive images of different peoples.

- Providing opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

- In keeping with Fundamental British Values (See DFE: Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools), promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Equality Considerations and Decision Making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the activity:

- Coincides with a religious holiday

- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities

- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

As a staff team we work to remove barriers and we will not unfairly discriminate on any grounds y:

- Making appropriate changes to teaching resources.
- Accessing Local Authority Services e.g. EAL Support
- Supporting children‟s emotional needs through supportive activities and interventions

Information on pupils by protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. Every

person has several of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment. In

order to ensure that all pupils are protected from discrimination, the school collects information on the

protected characteristics that are relevant to children. We have highlighted these below.

The Protected Characteristics are:

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

In addition to pupils with protected characteristics, we gather further information on the following groups of

pupils:

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Disadvantaged groups*
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Young carers
- Looked after children
- Other vulnerable groups**

*In the conditions of grant for the pupil premium, the DfE says that 'disadvantaged pupils' are:

- Pupils in year groups reception to year 11 recorded as 'ever 6 free school meals (FSM)'
- Looked after children (LAC), defined in the Children Act 1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority (LA) Children who have ceased to be looked after by an LA in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order

The Ofsted's school inspection handbook defines "disadvantaged pupils" as those:

- With special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Pupils who meet the criteria for pupil premium funding
- Children in need of help or protection who are receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker

** There is no set definition for "vulnerable pupils" from the Department for Education. This is because it's a very subjective area, and there are many different reasons why a child could be classed as vulnerable (depending on particular contexts). The Department for Education state that it's up to the head teacher to use their judgement in deciding whether they consider a pupil to be vulnerable. We include:

Children who are in receipt of services following assessment even if they do not have a formal status. For instance, those with a CAHMS service but with no formal diagnosis, those receiving prevention services through children's care, or youth justice, all of whom have been assessed by statutory agencies as vulnerable in some manner.

Informal types of vulnerability that may be important to the practice of local agencies such as for example when a child is referred to CAMHS who does not reach the threshold required to access services but where unmet need and vulnerability may still exist.

Current Equality information

Equality Objectives

In order to further support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching, we have set the following objectives:

- To 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.
- To raise levels of attainment in core subjects for vulnerable learners.
- To review levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement.
- Ensure the staffing team reflects the diverse community which we serve and provides all children with positive role models. Undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends with regard to race, gender and disability after each recruitment and report on this to the governing body. Increase the representation of teachers from local black and minority ethnic communities

- Train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the beginning of the next academic yea
- Job adverts, application forms and information improved to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce
- Ensure that the Parent School Association includes the diverse community that the school serves.
- To ensure that all children are attaining in line with national expectations.
- To ensure that all children have access to appropriate extra-curricular activities. Listen to children and parents about the type of activities they would like and do our best to provide them.