

2.17 - Equality, Disability and Discrimination Policy

Introduction

This policy incorporates the duties of schools under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the DDA 1995 Part 4 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) (SENDA). It is further based on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014. It also fully notices the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act (2010), which outlines that it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a 'protected characteristic'. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

In accordance with the above provisions, and especially the Equality Act (2010), the School will have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Ensure that staff expectations of different races or religious belief groups are no different.
- Ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to access the curriculum.
- Welcome all staff, governors, parents/guardians, and pupils, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sex and socio-economic background and encourage them to participate in the life of the school.

Definitions

Disability

According to the Equality Act, a person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which substantially and in the long term adversely affects the person's normal day-to-day activities. This applies to members of staff and pupils. Having a disability does not imply that a pupil has, for that reason alone, 'special educational needs' under the terms of the Education Act 1996 and the Code of Practice. Therefore, each pupil with a disability will require separate consideration and treatment.

Unlawful Discrimination

It is unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably than a person treats or would treat others because of their disability (known as a 'protected characteristic'). It is also unlawful to discriminate against a person for a reason arising from disability.

A person discriminates against a disabled person if he or she treats the disabled person unfavourably because of something arising as a consequence of that disabled person's disability, and he or she cannot show that the treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, and he or she knew or could reasonably have been expected to know, that the disabled person had the disability.

It will also be unlawful to fail to make 'reasonable adjustments' to admission and curriculum arrangements, and in relation to education and associated services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not disadvantaged in comparison with pupils who are not disabled without justification.

Less Favourable Treatment

For 'less favourable treatment' to lead to unlawful discrimination, it must be:

- for a reason related to the person's disability, and;
- less favourable treatment than the treatment given to a non-disabled person, and;
- not be justified.

Justification

Less favourable treatment can be justified if the reasons are material to the circumstances and substantial.

Guiding Principles

The School believes:

- All pupils are of equal value, whether they are disabled, whatever their race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, or status, whatever their sex or sexual orientation, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background.
- The provision of equal opportunities is the responsibility of the whole school community. It is reflected throughout the organisation of the school and addressed in the taught and hidden curriculum.
- It is important to strive to remove barriers and disadvantages that people may face concerning disability, race, sex, religion, belief, faith, and sexual orientation.
- Positive attitudes and relationships must be fostered, and mutual respect must be shown between groups and communities different from each other.

The School:

- Is aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils, designed to enhance access to, and participation by, disabled pupils, thus preventing them from being disadvantaged compared to their non-disabled peers.
- Does not discriminate against pupils or staff by treating them less favourably based on their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or marriage.
- Accounts for equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, the provision of education, and access for all pupils to facilities and services.
- Prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and ensures that activities across the curriculum promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
- Actively supports difference and diversity and raises pupils' awareness of the negative impact of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination through PSHE across the curriculum.
- Ensures resources reflect the diversity of the school population and local community and provides opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Promotes a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice of all types.
- Provides opportunities for pupils to listen to various opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- Provides parents and pupils with information detailing the school's rules and identifying behaviour expectations.
- The school has robust measures to follow the new worker protection act 2024 against sexual harassment in the workplace including a staff training module - antiharassment and bullying in the workplace

With specific regard to the multicultural perspective, the School:

- Ensures staff incorporate a balanced view of the world in their teaching.
- Ensures staff recognise and understand that pupils are world citizens who will meet various cultures throughout their lives.

With specific regard to sex, the School:

- Promotes non-sexist attitudes in both children and staff.
- Ensures pupils have equal access to opportunities to equip them for adult life.
- Ensures all pupils, irrespective of sex, meet challenging expectations.

- Works towards the eradication of negative sexual stereotyping.
- Ensures equal distribution of tasks between girls and boys.
- Review resources and displays to ensure they present a non-sexist attitude.
- Reviews responses to behaviour problems to ensure equal approaches to both sexes.

With specific regard to race, the School:

- Challenges racism in the context of a caring school community.
- Ensures no pupil or adult is treated in any way differently or in a derogatory manner, because of their race.
- Does not tolerate provocative behaviour, i.e., the wearing of any racist badges or insignia.
- Does not accept verbal abuse or name-calling, especially of a racist nature.
- Will not allow pupils to be ridiculed due to racial differences.
- Will not allow racist jokes or stories.

With specific regard to ability, the School:

- Believes every pupil is entitled to a positive, helpful learning environment, with work that matches individual needs. This will be both through adaptations in lessons and additional support from staff.
- Allows all pupils access to equipment, resources, and support.
- Values all pupils' efforts and achievements across the curriculum.
- Believes all pupils have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum.
- Responds to pupils learning needs individually.
- Understands pupils learn at different rates and factors affecting achievement include ability, emotional state, age, and maturity.
- Provides teaching and learning contexts which enable each pupil to achieve to his or her full potential.

With specific regard to physical disability, the School:

- Does not treat pupils differently to others due to their individual physical disabilities and needs.

- Makes provision, where possible and reasonable, for the individual special needs of any disabled children within the school community.
- Believes a physically disabled pupil has a right to participate in all activities in so far as their individual disability allows them to do so.

Inclusivity

The School will continue to consider disabled pupils for admission to the School provided that the criteria for admission are met. The School values the full range of its pupils and seeks to ensure that its practices are fully inclusive. Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled pupils while bearing in mind the interests of other pupils. There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not pupils with behavioural issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following may be underlying reasons for poor behaviour: mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy. The School will consider all these requirements when considering the inclusion of disabled pupils in the school's curriculum.

Staff

The School values each member of staff for their contribution and will seek to ensure that no member is disadvantaged because of his/her disability. The School is committed to implementing equal opportunities principles and monitoring and actively promoting equality in all aspects of staffing and employment (see the Equal Opportunities Policy). We strive to eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and follow the New Worker Protection act 2023 and legal duty to proactively take legal steps to prevent sexual harassment. All staff appointments and promotions are made based on merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We aim to ensure that, as far as possible, our staff reflects the diversity of our school and local community. We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, pupils, and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. The Head will consider the steps taken to ensure that members of staff who may have a disability are not treated less favourably and that reasonable adjustments are made for them.

Responsibilities

Governors

The Governors are responsible for discharging the school's duties, ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy, and its related procedures and action 6 plans are implemented. The Governors' monitor the School's effectiveness in maintaining their commitment and implementing their duties under the Equality Act,

regarding standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment.

The Head and Senior Leaders

The Head and Senior Management Team are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given appropriate training and support, and take appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. The Senior Management Team has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. They will have informed knowledge of the Equality Act (2010). In particular, the Head and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Identifying pupils who have disabilities.
- Ensuring that the policies are implemented in the School.
- Ensuring that non-discriminatory practices are developed.
- Identifying where 'reasonable adjustments' can be made.
- Training all staff in their responsibilities towards disabled pupils.
- Delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff as appropriate.
- Liaison with parents and any agencies as necessary.

They will ensure that disabled pupils are not discriminated against:

- Through the criteria they determine for admission to the School.
- By refusing, or deliberately not accepting, an application from a disabled person.

Teaching and Support Staff

All staff will:

- Ensure that this policy is implemented.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- Challenge prejudice, and discrimination, and deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- Plan and deliver lessons that reflect the school's ethos.
- Use materials that give positive images regarding race, sex, and disability.
- Expect the highest standards from all pupils.

- Support different groups of pupils in their class through adaptations to planning and teaching especially those with learning difficulties.
- Keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- Identify where reasonable adjustments can be made and report those that cannot be made within the allocated resources to the Senior Management Team.

Premises

To meet its statutory obligations, the School will ensure that the needs of disabled pupils and staff are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the school campus. Some of the School's existing premises are subject to listed buildings and other planning restrictions or cannot readily be modified. In these instances, the School will make reasonable adjustments, where possible, to meet the needs of individuals.

Admissions

Admission to the School usually depends on achieving an acceptable standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the school's age group, academic pace, and the availability of places. Due consideration will be given to educational experience in assessing pupils' achievement of an 'acceptable standard', and to maximising access for pupils to whom the school can add value. All examinations and tests are expected to be free of bias, and broadly to reflect expectations of pupils at the relevant stage in their development, regardless of background. Arrangements for tests are also made with the intention of ensuring that no candidate is unfairly disadvantaged, and, where practicable, reasonable adjustments will be made to cater for individual needs.

Special Educational Needs

The School has established guidelines for its schools on responding to pupils with special educational needs (SEN), which are explained in the associated policy. Initial and ongoing pupil assessment is intended to enable pupil difficulties/special gifts to be identified/supported, and the SENCOs oversee this provision.

Liaison with Parents

The School will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all pupils with disabilities and designate staff members with allocated time and effective communication skills.

Exclusion

Pupils will not be excluded from the schools based on a protected characteristic (as defined above) or because they are perceived to have protected characteristics or are associated with someone with a protected characteristic. Where a pupil with a disability

is facing exclusion, the School will consider whether or not the pupil's disability has a behavioural component, and reasonable adjustments will be made to take account of the possible effect of this, alongside the impact of the pupil's behaviour on the School community. In some circumstances, it may still be appropriate to exclude the pupil.

Complaints

Any parent who is not satisfied that the above policies have been properly applied may make a complaint in accordance with the School's formal complaints procedure, which complies with all statutory requirements and is available from the School. Pupils should be made aware of the mechanisms available to them within School to raise matters of concern of an academic or pastoral nature.

Person responsible:	AC	Implementation date: 28/04/2025
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Reviewed: 28/04/2025 AC
