

# Oak Meadow Primary School

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ, 01902 558517, oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk



## Equality and Diversity Policy

*From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow.*

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## The Equality Act 2010

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, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Equality Act requires all public organisations (including schools) to comply with 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 for all public organisations (including schools) are to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty;
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

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

## Aims and Key Principles

Our school is inclusive; we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and we are committed to ensuring all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act (2010) 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.

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 key principles:

- **All learners are of equal value** - Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, economic background, 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.
- **We recognise and respect difference** - We understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages that people may face, in relation to background, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe

that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all who learn, teach and visit Oak Meadow.

- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging** - We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from one another. 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.
- **We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development** - 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.
- **We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist** - 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.
- **We have the highest expectations of all our children** - We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

## **Our Equality Objectives**

As one of our specific duties as a public organisation, below are Oak Meadow Primary School's equality objectives. These will be reviewed within the specified time frame of at least every 4 years as part of a 3-year cycle in which a complete review of policies and practices will be undertaken. These objectives are specific and measurable and have been formulated in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and analysis of our school's equality information. Our equality objectives are:

- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all curricular opportunities, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity.
- To narrow the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in all core areas: reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- To diminish the gender difference between boys and girls in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups: Reception to Year 6.
- To continually consider how well the school ensures equality of opportunities for all its pupils.
- To tackle prejudice and promote understanding in relation to people with disabilities.
- Effectively support pupils ensuring progress is made by all, including vulnerable groups, i.e. boys and girls, disadvantaged pupils and SEND pupils.

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

Objective 1: To monitor and analyse pupil attainment and progress by race, gender and disability and act on any pupils or groups requiring additional support and intervention.

Objective 2: To increase the proportion of vulnerable pupils attaining expected levels of attainment.

Objective 3: To continually support parent and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement.

## **Promoting Equal Opportunity**

The Senior Leadership Team knows the needs of the school population and collects and analyses data in order to inform planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. Action is taken to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-related expectation as well as ensuring children from all groups are challenged to

reach higher levels. A wide range of teaching strategies are implemented throughout the school that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils. We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Systems and procedures are in place, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admission induction meetings and Reception transition meetings prior to entry into Reception. We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality. Oak Meadow Primary School takes positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions are designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives. In addition to this, we further advance equality of opportunity by:

- Using the information we gather to identify underachieving groups or individuals and plan targeted intervention;
- Ensuring participation of parents/ carers and pupils in school improvement;
- Listening to parents'/ carers' ideas and views;
- Listening to pupils at all times.

### **Eliminating Discrimination and other Conduct that is Prohibited by the Equality Act (2010)**

The information provided aims to demonstrate that we give careful consideration to equality issues in everything that we do at Oak Meadow Primary School. 'Due regard' ensures that we work towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act. We are committed to working for equality for all our staff, parents/ carers and children to meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

We eliminate discrimination by:

- Adoption of the single Equality Scheme;
- Ensuring that all children feel safe at school supported by the positive behaviour policy;
- Reporting, responding to and monitoring all racist incidents;
- Regularly monitoring the curriculum to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, promoting respect for diversity and which challenges negative stereotyping;
- Teaching to the highest standards and quality to ensure children reach their potential and that all pupils are given equal entitlement to success;
- Tracking pupil progress to ensure that all children make at least good progress, and intervening when necessary;
- Ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to access extra-curricular provision;
- Listening to and monitoring views and experiences of pupils and adults to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and procedures through our annual questionnaires.

### **Eliminating 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 use facilities and services.
- Our admissions arrangements 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, pregnancy or maternity.

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

### **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 including:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- Prejudices around race, religion or beliefs;
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.

Staff are made aware of how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents seriously (Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy).

### **Equal Opportunities for 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 in compliance with the law;
- 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/ carers, 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.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Governing Body**

The school's Governing Board ensures that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The Governing Board 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.

#### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support. The Headteacher will take appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination and reporting these as appropriate.

#### **Teachers 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 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 irrespective of race, religion, gender, economic background or disability;
- 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.

### **Site Staff, Lunchtime Staff and any Visitors**

All site staff, lunchtime staff and any 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.

### **Monitoring**

- Our attainment records, including attainment and progress of vulnerable groups, are monitored at Senior Leadership and Governor level;
- Attendance data is scrutinised at Senior Leadership and Governor level, with specific regard to vulnerable groups;
- Data, regarding exclusions and behaviour, is scrutinised at Senior Leadership and Governor level;
- Senior Leaders have a rolling programme for reviewing all school policies. The implications for equalities in new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced;
- Minutes of meetings are kept where equalities issues are discussed;
- Carry out and analyse Pupil Voice to ensure that the children's views are heard.

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 and carer questionnaires and parents' evenings;
- 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 and Pupil Voice;
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Senior Leadership and Governor level.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years and adjustments will be made as appropriate. Further amendments may occur with changes in legislation or as the need arises.