



# **HOLMLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL EQUALITY POLICY**

APPROVED BY: Governing Body

REVIEWED: October 2023

NEXT REVIEW: October 2024

## Introduction

Holmleigh Primary School 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 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). 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.

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

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.

## **Development of the policy**

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, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, self-evaluation review, school website and newsletters.

*There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEND, anti-bullying and charging and remissions policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team.*

*The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are 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; 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 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 make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- 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 sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity

## **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 beliefs
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. 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 including that of different groups as well as of attendance and achievement 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 publish and analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:
- 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.

### **We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all 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, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- 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, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- 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 a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events e.g. Black history month, Autism awareness week and our school fairs
- We include Equalities matters in our Newsletters to parents and Carers

**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 and focus meetings.
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's committee groups.

**Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Development 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.

Our Equality Objectives for 2023-2024 are:

Objective 1: To monitor and evaluate pupil achievement by race, gender, SEND, social deprivation and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data. We will then give additional support to those groupings as required.

Objective 2: To raise achievement for all children in the core subjects, and in particular for those underachieving groups, notably Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) children and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Objective 3: To ensure that children arriving in school with little or no English are fully supported to make rapid progress in English, to enable them to access the curriculum.

Objective 4: To ensure that the curriculum reflects and represents the school's diverse religious and ethnic communities, celebrating a range of festivals as appropriate.

Objective 5: To promote positive attitudes to difference between people of different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, ethnic origins, cultures, faiths and capabilities.

**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 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.

### **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. Each 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 Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys).

### **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.

### **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 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

### **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. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

#### **Key contacts**

Staff responsible for equalities: Margaret Boateng

Lead Governor: Matthew Caudle

## **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 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 and data is available:**

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

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

## **Complaints**

**Complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure**



## 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, suspensions 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 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
- 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, Autism awareness week, 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 – including the acoustic environment
- 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

## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY ACTION PLAN (2023 – 2024)**

#### **Holmleigh Primary School Equality Objectives**

**Objective 1:**

To monitor and evaluate pupil achievement by race, gender, SEN, social deprivation and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data. We will then give additional support to those groupings as required.

**Objective 2:**

To raise achievement for all children in the core subjects, and in particular for those underachieving groups, notably Caribbean heritage pupils, children eligible for free school meals, pupil premium and those with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Objective 3:**

To ensure that children arriving in school with little or no English are fully supported to make rapid progress in English, to enable them to access the curriculum.

**Objective 4:**

To ensure that the curriculum reflects and represents the school's diverse religious and ethnic communities, celebrating a range of festivals as appropriate.

**Objective 5:**

To promote positive attitudes to difference between people of different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, ethnic origins, cultures, faiths and capabilities.