



we are a learning community with the spirit to succeed

Holywell Primary School

Equality Policy

Status:	Non-Statutory
Approval Body:	Governing Body
Review Frequency:	1 Year
Last Review:	May 2022
Next Review:	Spring 2023



Equality Policy

1. Introduction

At Holywell Primary School 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.

2. Purpose of the policy

2.1 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/staff/parents/carers less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

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

2.3 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 annually
2. Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

2.4 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.

3. Links to other policies and documentation

3.1 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 is also included in our school improvement plan, self-

evaluation review, the school prospectus, school website, newsletters and all other relevant documentation.

3.2 There are also references in the Behaviour Management, SEND and Anti-bullying Policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, staff, the Senior Leadership Team and the School Council.

3.3 The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers and the way we comply with this is found in our Safer Recruitment Policy. All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process. This Equality Policy and related practices are covered in all staff inductions. All temporary staff are made aware of the Equality Policy and practices.

4. Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value. We do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, 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.

5. What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

5.1 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.

- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 We ensure that all relevant policies are made available to parents/carers and other interested parties on the school website and can be requested from the school office. We welcome comments from parents/carers.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- 5.7 Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

6. Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

The school policy on Behaviour Management together with our 'Charter' takes full account of the 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.

7. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

- 7.1 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 belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, or against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes
- 7.2 There is guidance on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents seriously.
- 7.3 We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and report regularly to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we have dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to eradicate prejudice-related incidents.

8. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- 8.1 We are highly visible, open and approachable and strive to have good and effective relationships with all our parents/carers. In addition to which, we provide a range of support strategies such as family learning, use of computers and interpreters, that enable all parents/carers to access the school environment.
- 8.2 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 also analyse attendance at parent consultations and take appropriate action to engage parents who have not attended.
- 8.3 We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- 8.4 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.

9. We collect, analyse and publish data, taking into account:

- vulnerable groups, overviewed at class, year group and school level
- the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability
- attendance and exclusions of different groups

In addition:

- 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'.
- 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 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 have also implemented an Accessibility Plan designed to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum, improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

10. Positive action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantages 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.

11. What we are doing to foster good relations

- we prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- we teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) 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 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.
- we include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people.
- we provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- we promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors and whole school events.

12. Other ways we address equality issues

12.1 We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed, e.g. Governors' Meetings.

12.2 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.

12.3 In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- review feedback and responses from all pupils or specific groups of pupils, from the School Council, PSHE lessons and whole school surveys.
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on SEND Support Plans
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

13. Equality objectives

13.1 The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

- 13.2 We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups.
- 13.3 We will review and update our Equality Objectives every four years and report annually to the Governing Body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.
- 13.4 We will publish an evaluation of the success in meeting the objectives for parents and carers on the school website and a copy can also be requested from the school office.

14. Roles and responsibilities

- 14.1 We expect all members of the school community 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. A check list for school staff and governors is attached at Appendix 1.

14.2 Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures are implemented.

The Governing Body keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions and exclusions. Governors review the Equality Policy annually.

14.3 Headteacher

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.

14.4 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 curricular 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.

14.5 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.

15. **Equal opportunities for staff**

15.1 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.

15.2 All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

15.3 We are also committed to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

15.4 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.

15.5 We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

15.6 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.

16. **Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

This policy is reviewed annually.

17. **Disseminating the policy**

17.1 This Equality Policy is available;

- on the school website
- as paper copies in the school office

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

17.3 We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on Behaviour Management, SEND and Anti-bullying.

Appendix 1 - 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 school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when their trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for different groups and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement 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.
- 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 environment is increasingly as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in accessible parts 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. Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to all candidates and voters.