

Gilthill Primary School – Equality Policy

October 2014

Any school requiring further assistance or advice should contact the Achievement and Equality Team directly. Please contact Sarah Lee, Team Manager, Achievement and Equality Team: 0115 854 6440 sarah.lee@nottscc.gov.uk

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited below, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as 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
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled people
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- Gay people as well as straight.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- gay people as well as straight.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7), in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this is what makes a difference. Within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, we set out any specific equality objectives we need to pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

School Context

Gilthill Primary School is situated in the western suburbs of Nottingham approximately seven miles from the city centre. The catchment area comprises of mainly private housing, with some council and housing association homes. The vast majority of pupils and staff have a white British background and we have only a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. We have two male members of staff with the rest female. A log of incidents in relation to ethnicity, gender and disability is kept.

At Gilthill Primary School we are committed to ensuring this policy is actively implemented and is focussed on achieving positive outcomes.

Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces all previous policies relating to Race Equality, Gender Equality and Disability Equality. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as 'protected characteristics'.

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

We expect all our staff to act in a non-discriminating manner and be mindful to avoid actions that will be deemed as harassment in the services we provide to the public and our wider community. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, as service providers, we have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing the services we provide.

The Curriculum/Teaching and Learning

Equality and diversity will be as embedded as far as is possible in all areas of the curriculum and that pupils will be given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability etc. Each subject leader will be kept under review, how their curriculum subject can contribute to, and promote tolerance for equality and diversity in society. This includes the review of resources available to ensure materials reflect both the diversity of the school, local community and wider society as a whole. Attainment and achievement data will be collected and used to inform planning and provision to support individuals and groups of pupils. Through the monitoring and assessment of all children and provision maps/IEPs specific assessment of pupils with additional needs such as EAL, SEN will consider the effects of cultural bias of the materials used.

Ethos and organisation

In order to bring out the best in our pupils, Gilthill School aims to provide an education of the highest quality which will build on what children have to offer to give them a broad and balanced curriculum in a stimulating, enjoyable and caring environment where all are valued. Equality and diversity principles will run through all our day to day practices and be embedded in all our policies, such as:-

- Admissions, induction and attendance
- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being (linking to anti-bullying and safeguarding)
- Care, guidance and support
- Parental/carer involvement
- Working with the wider community and community cohesion
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions (linking to SEAL)
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Inclusion (linking to curriculum, participation etc.)

Addressing prejudice and prejudice related bullying

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.

The school is committed to its legal obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment and victimisation, as well as its duty to foster positive relations between groups and individuals.

“A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender's prejudice against people because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other reason.”

The school takes their obligations seriously and will act upon and record any incidents reported to them. The Headteacher will keep the governors informed of any incidents through her termly headteachers report. Staff will have a yearly update of procedures and recording incidents. New staff will be given the opportunity to access training if required. Through PSHE lessons staff will actively address issues linked to prejudice and bullying.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing body is responsible for ensuring the school complies with the legislation, and that the policy, the school's practice and related procedures and any action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed and monitored. The P.F& G.P sub-committee will take reports on progress and review this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for the overall implementation of the policy on a day to day basis, and is responsible for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination; and for ensuring that **all** staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation and that they are given appropriate training and support to meet these responsibilities.

All staff have a responsibility to keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work, and must support the ethos of the school through their actions. They should undertake all their work activities mindful of equalities issues, including planning, assessment, and individual support for pupils and groups of pupils. They should demonstrate an awareness of specific individual needs and promote respect for diversity. They should know how to respond to and deal with any prejudice-related incidents which occur.

Information and Resources

Employees should be aware that they can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the governing body for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.

The school will review annually any data collected in relation to equality and linked to data collated on the profile of pupils on roll; attainment data; attendance data; exclusions data; hate incidents etc. The school will also review on a regular basis the resources used by the children.

Staff Development and Training

All Staff across all sections of the community (teaching, support, mid-days, office staff etc) will have their professional development needs met in relation to this agenda. Annual updates linked to achievement data will address any equality issues and highlight the need for any training required for staff. The SLT will also review any incidents and training needs that might occur. The staff handbook gives advice to new members of staff and any temporary staff employed by the school.

Breaches of the Policy

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or parents and their families are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored periodically, jointly by the head teacher and the governing body, to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. A particular focus will be given during the monitoring of the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion) and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and the policy will be reviewed in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the school will implement them.