



# Plaistow & Kirdford Primary School Equality Policy

Approved by: Governing Body

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## SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School is a welcoming, friendly, caring and inclusive community, where we inspire and challenge all to fulfil their potential with confidence, we aim to encourage the children's enjoyment of learning for life and to take pride in all they do.

Our vision is to be an outstanding school at the heart of its community where children develop as confident, caring citizens, able to discover their potential and embrace the opportunities life brings.

Equality forms the core of the ethos for schools which are fully committed to providing every possible life chance for all young people and staff to succeed. All stakeholders in a school community should have the right to enjoy, achieve and feel valued and safe from discrimination across the whole range of school activities.

### 1. Introduction to our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan

Schools are required to meet significant 'positive statutory duties' in the area of equality. These require schools to promote equality of opportunity in everything that they do.

The "Public Sector Equality Duty" means that schools may not take a reactive approach to equality, but a proactive approach to equality must be adopted. In practice, this requires all schools to:-

- take positive and proactive steps to identify areas of potential inequality before they have the chance to have an impact on people
- make changes to ensure that any areas of potential inequality are eliminated

Overall, Equality Duties are not new to schools. The Duty to Promote Race Equality came into force in 2002, The Duty to Promote Disability Equality came into force in 2006 and The Gender Equality Duty in 2007.

As of 1st April 2012, The Equality Act (2010) has required schools to meet a single Public Sector Equality Duty which encompasses 'General' and 'Specific' duties in promoting equality across the full range of protected characteristics, namely:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Age (in their role as employers)

Our Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan integrates our statutory duties in relation to race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, age, marriage and civil partnerships and promoting community cohesion. The duties cover; staff, pupils and people using the services of the school such as parents and community and includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) and Action Plan enables us to achieve a framework which covers all eight equality strands and ensures that we meet our responsibilities of the public sector duties in an inclusive way. We will continue to meet our statutory duties by reporting annually on the progress of the SES and action plan. This will be reviewed by our Governing Body and will cover activities undertaken in relation to the eight equality strands and promoting community cohesion.

## 2. Meeting our duties

Under statutory duties all schools have a 'General Duty' to:

i. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; this means:-

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- taking steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it
- encouraging people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low

iii. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; this means:-

- tackling prejudice
- promoting understanding

## Race Equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate racial discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity

### 3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Dealing with racist incidents:

We follow the Local Authority Procedures for dealing with racist actions or any form of discrimination.

#### Disability Equality

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people which means that we must have due regard to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. Eliminate disability related harassment
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
6. Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people

#### Accessibility

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled pupils and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

1. Increase access to the curriculum
2. Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access
3. Make written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways

We must ensure that disabled pupils do not receive less favourable treatment and to do this the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

#### Gender Equality

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
2. Promote equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap.

#### Transgender

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the school community.

Age, sexual orientation, religion, belief, pregnancy and maternity

We must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. The scheme includes our priorities (and actions) to eliminate discrimination to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

### Community Cohesion

We also have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious socio-economic groups. We have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance to meet our objectives.

### 3. Our school Values and Vision

Our school mission statement 'Believe, achieve, succeed' is evident throughout the school and on a variety of communication media used regularly by the school.

Our school vision was agreed by all stakeholders and is as follows:

An inspiring journey of discovery, friendship and fun.

We inspire learning by understanding each child's starting point, developing strengths and supporting special needs. We aim to ensure that every child is challenged to achieve their full potential through a rich and varied curriculum brought to life by excellent teaching.

We strive to ensure that children develop respect for themselves, each other, their families and our local community and environment.

Children and adults working together to create an ethos where learning is celebrated, achievements are shared and where we challenge ourselves and others.

### **Our Goal**

Develop thoughtful and responsible young people with self-confidence and the knowledge to leave primary school able to be brave in their choices, bold in their next steps and prepared for the rapidly changing world in which we live.

### **Strategy**

1. Provide the best possible education for children, based on high quality indoor and outdoor teaching and learning in a secure, stimulating and purposeful environment that conveys high expectations and empowers children as learners.
2. Go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum to provide an education that is broad, balanced, relevant, purposeful, interesting and enriched by first hand experiences.
3. Create a self-disciplined and self-aware environment in school based on respect for others, tolerance and understanding so that children are members of and understand the value of a happy, warm, caring and friendly community.
4. Recognise and celebrate our childrens' achievements in the spirit that every child is unique and has something to offer.
5. Use praise and encouragement to foster self-esteem and self-reliance so that children become confident and independent learners.
6. Build an enduring partnership between home and school based on positive relationships and support, enabling parents to be fully involved in their children's learning.

All this information is available on our web site. In meeting the duties described above all our actions will embody our school's key principles and values. Also :-

- We will strive to make the best possible provisions for all pupils, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- We will respect diversity. We know that treating people equally is not simply a matter of treating people the same. We believe the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and enjoy community life. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.
- We know that equality is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.

- We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school and try to involve them in policy review.
- We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life for all learners in our school.

#### 4. Our School Setting

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 with the capacity to accommodate 210 pupils, aged 5-11. We currently have 185 children on roll. Plaistow and Kirdford is a smaller than average community primary school that serves the local communities of Plaistow, Kirdford, Ifold as well as other communities across the county boundary.

#### 5. Collecting and analysing equality information for pupils at Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School:

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School is an inclusive school. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her/his potential.

We collect and analyse the following equality information for our pupils:

- Attainment levels
- Progress levels
- Attendance levels
- Exclusions

Attendance at Extended School activities/extra curricular activities ( e.g. educational visits)

Participation in School Council

Inclusion in the following groups: English as an Additional Language (EAL), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Free School Meals (FSM) and Service Children. If they become a significant number in school, Travellers and Ethnic Minorities will also be monitored.

#### 6. Collecting and analysing equality information for employment and governance at Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School.

We are committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School also aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body that is able to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of the local population.

All staff vacancies are filled using the Local Authority application forms which contain requests for information relating to ethnicity, gender and disability.

Applicants however can choose to indicate they do not wish to give this information.

All information relating to staff is kept on the school's central database – SIMS.

We are mindful of the Laws relating to confidentiality when devising this Plan (and Action Plan). Although there is a statutory duty to share information about the school's Single Equality Scheme (SES), we recognise that care must be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that any information published cannot be used to identify individuals.

In respect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, any analysis of sensitive information is undertaken by a senior member of the school staff and a synopsis passed to a working party as required.

## 7. Consultation and Involving People

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School is a predominantly white community. We appreciate that the legislation states it is important that minority groups (for race, disability and gender) are involved in the formulation and development of equality schemes and action plans, and we endeavour to involve as many people as possible in our community. Over the course of the academic year we aim to consult with parents, children, staff and governors to create a Single Equality Scheme (SES) (and action plan).

Examples include of what might be included are:

- Discussion at School Council
- Contact with parents/carers
- Discussion at staff meetings
- Discussions at governing body meetings (committees)
- Discussion with other local schools, including those in The Weald Locality Group

Areas of good practice identified:

Areas of need identified: (ideas)

## 8. What have we achieved so far

### Race equality

We have had two racist incidents in school during the last academic year (2015-2016), currently there have been no reported incidents this year.

### Disability equality

All pupils and staff are fully involved in the life of the school and have full access to all we offer. If we can see that mobility could become a greater



issue for staff or pupils then action will be taken. Wheelchair access is available throughout the school.

### Community Cohesion

In addition to the detailed description given above, we also undertake the following:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – Our curriculum is fully accessible to all children. Parents are regularly informed of the learning that takes place both in newsletters and through open meetings. We feel that our curriculum has a global perspective enabling children to see themselves in context in the wider world community. Our children through PSHE and the RE curriculum, have a sound understanding of difference and how different is neither better nor worse – it is something to be celebrated.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. Relationships are good within school and pupils are good citizens in the community. Spiritual development is enhanced in a number of ways through the school environment and the children's approach to the daily act of worship including assemblies led by the local clergy and celebration visits to two local churches.
- Engagement and extended services. All our children have access to a range of extended services.
- There is representation on our School Council from children of all year groups. The School Council meets regularly and is supported by staff members. They disseminate discussions and decisions via class meetings, assemblies and minutes of their meetings. As children progress through the school the children begin to gain responsibilities. These encourage children to become fully involved in the life of the school and to gain an understanding of what it means to be an active member of a community e.g. Buddies for new reception children; School Councillors, Monitors, House Captains and guides for school visitors.

### Religion and Belief

As a maintained school we use the Local Authority syllabus and guidelines for teaching Religious Education. Pupils are taught about Christianity and the major world faiths – Judaism, Islam and Hinduism together with the celebration of other major faiths important to our school community e.g. Diwali, Chinese New Year etc. Worship and prayer are explored in the context of all religions and we try to impart on children how important faith, belief, worship and prayer are to some people and to encourage the value of respect for all. As a community we have links with the local churches. Local clergy or members PCC team regularly lead assemblies and services throughout the

year. All children are encouraged to attend and participate at their own level. We respect parents right to withdraw their children from RE and Collective Worship.

#### 9. Equality impact assessments

Equality impact assessment is a systematic method of checking all school policies and practices to ensure they are genuinely accessible and meet the needs of all our staff and the local community in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. Plaistow and Kirdford School is keen to ensure that none of its policies and practices could disadvantage people with disabilities, from different ethnic backgrounds or a differing gender. The school has in place a range of associated policies that have been agreed by all staff and governors.

All school policies are reviewed over a one or three year period.

#### 10. Commissioning and Procurement

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School is required by law to make sure that when we buy services from another organisation to help us provide our services, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a factor in selection during any tendering process.

#### 11. Publishing our scheme

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) will be made accessible to all persons within our local and school community in the following ways:

- School website
- Staff induction

#### 12. Annual Review of Progress

We will continue to review annually the actions we have taken in the development of our Single Equality Scheme (SES) which include:

- The results of any information gathering activities for race, disability and gender and how we used this information towards improvement
- The outcomes of involvement activities from minority groups within our community
- A summary from equality impact assessments undertaken
- An update of the progress made against priorities
- Celebrating what we have achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion

We will also revise our Single Equality Scheme (SES) and Action Plan every three years.

#### 13. On-going evolution of our scheme

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing evolvement of our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This could include:

- A regular slot at School Council meetings to discuss equality and diversity issues
- A regular reference at staff meetings
- Having periodic school open days/evenings for the wider school community to celebrate the work of pupils and give the opportunity for feedback, including plays and performances.