

# **Lancastrian Infant School Equality Policy**



**Policy Adopted by Governing Body on: 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**Policy to be reviewed on: 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020**



## LANCASTRIAN INFANT SCHOOL EQUALITY POLICY



### **Introduction:**

This policy was discussed and written in collaboration with the staff, parents and governors of the school. The policy outlines how the school complies with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (specific duties) Regulations 2011.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

As far as schools are concerned, for the most part, the effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. However, schools that are already complying with the law should not find major differences in what they need to do. The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools that existed under previous legislation – such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions to single-sex schools and schools of a religious character, are all replicated in the new act.

However, there are some changes that will have an impact on schools:

- introduction of a new single equality duty to replace the previous three separate duties
- the requirement for schools to publish equality information and objectives
- employers may not ask health-related questions of applicants before a job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. Schools should no longer, as a matter of course, require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.
- it is now unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil
- it is now unlawful to discriminate against a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby
- Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.
- the reasonable adjustment duty requires schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils
- it is now unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling.
- the school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references for former pupils.

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation. (See Appendix 1)

### Special provisions for disability

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. In particular, it works in only one direction – that is to say, it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

### Admissions

Schools with a religious character (commonly known as faith schools) have certain exceptions to the religion or belief provisions which allow them to discriminate because of religion or belief in relation to admissions and in access to any benefit, facility or service.

Lancastrian is not a faith school and does not discriminate in any way when admitting pupils.

### Accessibility Plans:

Schools must implement accessibility plans, which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Schools will also need to have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan. Our School has an Accessibility Plan which can be found on the School website. This is reviewed annually.

Additional information and details of this 2010 Act can be found at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/policiesandprocedures/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

### **SCHOOL DETAILS**

Our school is situated in the centre of Chichester in the heart of West Sussex. We are a city school with a wide catchment area. Children attend our school who live in and around Chichester.

The majority of staff, parents and pupils at Lancastrian are of a White British ethnicity.

An increasing number of our pupils are of different nationalities and speak languages other than English as their first language. This is currently approximately 20%.

### **RATIONALE**

We believe that every individual is unique and special and that we each have the right to be valued, respected and offered equal opportunities, access and treatment. This is regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. Our school aims are underpinned by this central belief. We promote equality and challenge discrimination and stereotyping to make our school truly inclusive and we promote high achievement for all. We give due regard to the Equality Act whenever significant decisions are being made or when policies are developed or reviewed.

## **INCLUSION STATEMENT**

In keeping with the school's stated aims and objectives, staff provide an entitlement to the curriculum to all pupils without prejudice for sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

The curriculum provides opportunities for each child to flourish and succeed.

There is equal access to all aspects of the curriculum through careful planning of lessons which incorporates and appreciates the needs of individuals.

All of our pupils need to acquire a wide range of skills involving problem solving and the use of different tools and materials.

Inclusion in education:

- involves increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, all school activities
- involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in the locality
- is concerned with improving schools for staff as well as for pupils
- involves overcoming barriers to the access and participation of particular students and analysis may reveal gaps in the attempts of a school to respond to diversity more generally
- accepts that all students have a right to an education in their locality – as long as the resources within the locality meet the needs of those students
- accepts that diversity is not viewed as a problem to be overcome, but as a rich resource to support the learning of all
- is concerned with fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities
- is one aspect of inclusion in society

## **STAFFING**

We are an equal opportunities employer. The Governing Body will not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. All staff have the right to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Appraisal procedures, as detailed in our CPD and Appraisal and Capability policies (see also equality and diversity in employment).

## **VISITORS TO SCHOOL**

When making an appointment to visit the school, office staff will enquire about any specific needs that visitors may have and we will make our best endeavours to meet these needs.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

We will monitor school publications, documentation, notices and display for the use of acceptable language and to avoid stereotypical bias.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

Our aim is for all children to succeed and make progress across a broad and balanced curriculum. To achieve this, we promote equal opportunities.

We will:

- be aware of equal opportunities issues when planning and assessing all aspects of the curriculum
- treat children as individuals, recognising and their individual needs
- provide equal access to the curriculum and other aspects of school life
- ensure the fullest possible participation of all children
- challenge myths, discrimination and stereotypes
- use materials which reflect social and cultural diversity

### **REWARDS AND SANCTIONS**

We will ensure that our behaviour policy is applied fairly and equally to all pupils. Rewards and sanctions will be given according to our agreed principles and will relate to behaviours and attitudes, not to any real or perceived differences.

### **RESOURCES**

All books, materials and resources used in school will be chosen to avoid racial bias, sexual stereotyping, and must reflect as far as possible the diverse cultures of the society in which we live. Resources should positively reflect differences. Care will be taken to ensure equal access to resources.

### **RACE**

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

We aim to provide equal opportunities for all races and promote good race relations. To achieve this we will:

- acknowledge that our society is culturally diverse and develop an appropriate, multi-cultural curriculum and environment
- challenge racist remarks and respond in an appropriate manner.
- ensure that books and resources reflect a wide range of cultures in a positive way
- monitor and address any differences between racial groups in their attainment and achievement
- value all languages and recognise multi-linguists as an asset
- respect the dress requirements of all cultures and religions, taking account of safety regulations across the curriculum
- promote an understanding and respect of different cultures within our society
- invite visitors from other cultures into school whenever possible.

### **GENDER**

We aim to provide equal opportunities for both sexes.

To achieve this we will:

- Carefully select books, equipment and toys and teaching materials to avoid gender bias and stereotyping
- show disapproval of sexist remarks and respond in an appropriate manner
- give positive encouragement to both sexes to participate in all activities and to work and play freely with others
- take account of the interests and concerns of both boys and girls when planning activities and allow for a variety of outcomes to accommodate both sexes
- have equal, high expectations of both boys and girls

- recognise the possibility of gender bias in our teaching styles
- ensure that rewards and sanctions, the recognition of achievement and the delegation of responsibility are all offered equally to both sexes
- take note of relevant research and advice concerning gender issues.

### **DISABILITY**

The Act defines disability as when a person has a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. We aim to recognise and provide for the needs of any children with physical or learning disabilities, giving them equal opportunities within our school.

To achieve this we will:

- Ensure that we make best endeavours and reasonable adjustments to enable any child with additional needs or a disability to be admitted to our school.
- welcome anyone with a disability into our school – both children and adults
- boost the self-esteem of any disabled child
- be knowledgeable about the disabilities or special needs of any child in our care
- facilitate the fullest possible participation in all activities for pupils with disabilities or particular needs
- be aware of the special provision required by some children with disability and make every effort to provide it
- foster an understanding of disability within the school
- ensure equal access and opportunity for adults with disability and encourage them to visit or help in school.

### **MONITORING**

Our monitoring involves collecting data, analysing and assessing it to measure the school’s performance and effectiveness, and then identifying how the school can improve. We monitor the performance and progress of all groups of pupils and implement programmes to narrow any gaps in achievement.

The Headteacher is responsible, with the Leadership Team, for judging whether the outcomes of monitoring are affected by issues of equality and whether this policy is being put into practice consistently and effectively. If differences are highlighted that may indicate some inequality in provision, opportunity or treatment, this will be investigated and addressed. The Headteacher will share any concerns identified and agree future actions with the Governors.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:**

- **Equality and Diversity in employment policy**
- **Lancastrian School equality Objectives**
- **SEND report**
- **Accessibility plan**

## **Appendix 1**

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. An example might be holding a parents' meeting on a Friday evening, which could make it difficult for observant Jewish parents to attend.

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person". This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic. Where schools are concerned, the offence of harassment as defined in this way in the Act applies only to harassment because of disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity, and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It is very important to recognise that this does not mean that schools are free to bully or harass pupils on these other grounds - to do so would still be unlawful as well as unacceptable. Any case against the school would be on grounds of direct discrimination rather than harassment.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act.