



*'Helping each other prepare for a bigger world'*

## **Birdlip Primary School**

### **EQUALITY, DISABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

**Date adopted: January 2018**

**Date to be reviewed: January 2021**

#### **INTRODUCTORY NOTES**

When the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there was no longer a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives.

#### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. 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.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, 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:



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- 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

*The term ethnicity is used in preference to race or racial group, on the grounds that it better reflects the intentions and concerns of race relations legislation.*

- *There are references where appropriate to religious affiliation and identity.*
- *There are references where appropriate to sexual identity and to challenging homophobia.*
- *The duty to promote community cohesion is integrated into the policy, particularly but not only in the third of the seven principles.*
- *Disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexuality are referred to in alphabetical order, not in the order in which legislation requiring equality schemes and policies was introduced.*
- *The phrasing at certain points reflects the specific duties required by the Equality Act 2010, particularly the duties to publish information (principle 8), to engage with interested groups and individuals (principle 6), and to formulate and publish objectives (principle 9).*

### **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.



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### **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 where feasible:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- All people regardless of their sexual orientation.

### **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
- all people regardless of their sexual orientation.

### **Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence**

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

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.

### **Principle 9: Objectives**

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

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender.



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## **EQUALITY POLICY**

Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, and each individual is respected for who they are.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This policy statement outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Birdlip Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Parents
- Governors
- Visitors to the school
- Students on placement.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life, and is the responsibility of every member of the school community.

This policy statement reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of discussion within a working party made up of representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, governors and pupil representatives.

All members of the school community should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value and be given equal opportunities regardless of:

- Ethnicity
- Gender (including Transgender)
- Social background
- Ability/Disability
- HIV/AIDS
- Belief
- Age
- Marital status
- Nationality/Citizenship
- Sexual orientation.

In the context of the school we feel the most appropriate definition is that: Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, and each individual is respected for who they are.

### **ETHOS AND ATMOSPHERE**

At Birdlip Primary School we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.



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- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.
- The displays around the school are of high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.
- Although physical access to the school is difficult under normal circumstances vehicular access to a school door can be easily arranged for disabled visitors.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies and classroom activities

**We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.**

Every three years, accordingly, we will draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue as the need arises. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

**EXAMPLES: The following points set out some examples of how this Policy is successfully implemented in the school:-**

### **Learning Environment**

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils.
- The adults in the school try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEN policy and Disability Equality Scheme).
- The school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All pupils are actively involved in their own learning.
- A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.



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### **Staffing and Staff Development**

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This includes access for pupils to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages.

- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

### **The curriculum**

At Birdlip Primary School we aim to ensure that our planning reflects our specific commitment to equality of opportunity in all subject areas and cross curricular themes in line with the National Curriculum.

- Our planning takes account of the differing needs of pupils and their progression.
- We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that
- teaching and learning reflect the nine principles set out above.

### **Resources and Materials**

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Birdlip Primary School is a high priority. These resources should:

- reflect "the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society"
- reflect a variety of viewpoints
- show positive images of males and females in society including people with disabilities
- reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues
- be equally accessible to all members of school community consistent with health and safety
- not include explicitly and implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist materials. Our materials seek to promote all areas of equality.

### **Organisation of Learning**

When organising groups for various activities, consideration is always given to the composition of the group, to provide a balance appropriate to the activity.

At Birdlip Primary School our environment is not culturally diverse, and we are very conscious of the need to provide first hand experiences for the pupils to encounter



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people from other cultures. One way that we do this is through the provision of extra curricular activities. It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age.

We try to ensure that all non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

### **Language**

We recognise that it is important at Birdlip Primary School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- does not offend
- creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals eg Inuit rather than Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians.

### **Provision for Bilingual pupils**

We undertake at Birdlip Primary School to make appropriate provision for all bilingual groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller children
- those from refugee families
- pupils whose home language is not a standard form of English pupils for whom English is an additional language.

While there is a need for pupils to learn to communicate in standard English we believe that their home language should be celebrated and respected.

### **Ethos and organisation**

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.



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### **THE DEFINITION OF DISABILITY**

*"A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."*

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives.

### **INCREASING PARTICIPATION - the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculums**

The strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

#### **Aims**

Birdlip Primary School aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this will include:

- Having high expectations of all pupils
- Finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and drama
- Planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that pupils with disabilities can participate
- Setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly
- Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities
- Planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities
- Raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training
- By providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly
- By using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language
- By examining our library and reading books to ensure that there are examples of positive images of disabled people



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### **ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

**The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties** relating to:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example
  - antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
  - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g. unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender).

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these (see Behaviour Policy and also Gloucestershire document on Racial Harassment in Education - Good Practice Guide for Schools).

Prejudice-related incidents will be identified, assessed, dealt with and kept in the 'bullying log' held in office and will be reported to the GB/LA as necessary.

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 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.
- A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy and the individual with this responsibility is named at the front sheet of this policy
- 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.
- The HT has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy.
- All staff are expected to:
  - promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
  - deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
  - plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in above
  - support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
  - keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.



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### **STAFFING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages.

We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

### **PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential. We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to other diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond.

### **INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

### **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

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

### **BREACHES OF THE POLICY**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

- We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
- The person on the staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the policy is the HT S/he will be responsible for:
  - Leading discussions in designated staff meetings which will include support staff, to discuss issues of equal opportunities within the school community.
  - Working closely with the Governor responsible for this area who is the community cohesion governor



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Monitoring the following will enable the school to see where equality of opportunity needs to be more intensely focused:

- SATs results
- participation in extra-curricular activities
- exclusions and truancy
- continuous assessment of children's learning
- racist and sexist incidents
- results from screening for specific learning needs
- attendance.

### **LEGISLATION**

We are bound by the legal requirements of the following legislation:

- [Human Rights Act 1998](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Civil Partnership Act 2004](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Gender Recognition Act 2004](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Race Relations \(Amendment\) Act 2000](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 \(Amendment\) Regulations 2003](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Disability Discrimination Act 2005](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Disability Discrimination \(Public Authorities\)\(Statutory Duties\) Regulations 2005](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#) [Opens in New Window] (SENDA)
- [The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 \(Pensions\) Regulations 2003](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Disability Rights Commission Act 1999 \(repealed\)](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Education \(Modification of Enactments Relating to Employment\) \(England\) Order 2003](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Education Act 1996 - Part IV](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Employment Equality \(Age\) Regulations 2006](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Employment Equality \(Sex Discrimination\) Regulations 2005](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Employment Equality \(Religion or Belief\) Regulations 2003](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [The Employment Equality \(Sexual Orientation\) Regulations 2003](#) [Opens in New Window]
- [Equality Act 2006](#) [Opens in New Window]

### **FOOTNOTES**

**Source:** Gloucestershire County Council, Derbyshire, drawing for some its phrasing from documents developed by other local authorities and by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.



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### **BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

1. As mentioned in the introductory note on page 1, this model statement is adapted from one originally produced in Derbyshire.
2. In its overall framework the Derbyshire policy on equalities in education is based on the race equality policy that it developed in response to the Race Relations Act 2000, and that was included in *Here, There and Everywhere: belonging, identity and equality in schools* published by Trentham Books in 2004.
3. The list of principles at paragraph 4 is adapted from material in *Equality Impact Assessments: a workbook*, published by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families in December 2007, and revised in November 2010.
4. The model statement takes into account guidance issued by other local authorities. These include Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dudley, Durham, Hertfordshire, Newcastle and Sheffield.