



Bentfield Primary School **Equality Policy and Objectives**

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

2. Legislation and guidance

This Single Equalities Policy provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice and discrimination.

We have incorporated our individual policies for race equality, disability equality and gender equality into one overarching Single Equality Policy to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school.

Our Policy includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next four years.

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The [Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

At Bentfield Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion, belief or socio-economic background.

Our commitment to equality is a fundamental part of our drive towards excellence. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate in school life.

It is the governing body's responsibility to:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher
- Ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate assessments informing future plans
- Follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups

- Have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body
- Be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy

The headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society
- Keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in Section 8.

4. Eliminating discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics and they vary slightly according to whether the person is at work or using a service. There are nine 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. The general duty to promote **race equality** means that we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Schools have a duty to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion, belief and sexual orientation. For schools, this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils. The general duty to promote **disability equality** means that we must have due regard to:

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

The disability equality general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it compliments and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments. The general duty to promote **gender equality** means that we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.

Accordingly, the school's equal opportunities leader (The Headteacher) will provide general guidance on matters which require clarification whilst ensuring professional guidance is sought when specific reference is needed to the Equality Act 2010 and relevant legislation.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

Culture & Ethos

- We are committed to celebrating diversity and equality in many ways, in particular by recognising the uniqueness of every individual, as reflected on our school website.
- Good personal and community relations are actively promoted by fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all members of our community.
- Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.
- Information on ethnicity, gender and disability is collected through the admissions process.
- Whole school systems emphasising praise, recognition and reward exist to promote and celebrate positive behaviour, sustained effort and hard work, contributions to the school community, and achievements outside school. An assembly to celebrate achievement is held each week.
- We promote positive attitudes towards disabled people by having an open admissions policy and including all children in all activities
- We promote positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups/religions etc.
- We involve pupils, parents and staff in the life and work of the school, for example through involvement in community events, through our PTA etc.
- We communicate behaviour expectations through modelling good behaviour, and having a clear and explicit Behaviour Policy that is shared with pupils and parents.
- We ensure that we welcome applications for school places and jobs from all sections by having a comprehensive, non-selective intake. Aside from necessary qualifications, we place no barriers on applications for jobs

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities
- Providing a secure environment in which all can flourish and achieve (be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being)
- Providing a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging; prepare pupils for life in a diverse society in which they are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity

- Providing positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age
- Planning systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity; actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage
- Making inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Analyse attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing, determining strengths and areas for improvement, and implementing actions in response to this information
- Involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures
- Publish and share our policies and statutory assessments with the whole community
- Ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity
- Have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others

Teaching & Learning - We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we track pupil progress and identify underperformance, and provide support to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps.
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes/values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour/prejudice.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and interests of all pupils
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance, for example through termly monitoring of data, recognising and awarding high attendance.

Admissions and Exclusions

We follow Essex County Council's admissions arrangements which are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Any suspensions or exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Ensuring Fair and Equal Treatment for Staff and Others

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against adults as well as pupils in school and that positive role models and a wider perspective will strengthen the school, we will:

- Demonstrate our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing, recruitment and employment practices.
- Ensure that all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

Employer Duties

As an employer, we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Ensuring Fair and Equal Treatment for Pupils

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against pupils, the school:

- Will accommodate the needs of different cultures, races and religions where reasonably possible (in relation to wearing of uniform for example).
- Monitors the use of sanctions to ensure that staff do not impose stricter disciplinary penalties on one group than they do in similar circumstances to others.
- Will ensure where relevant that teaching or the expression of religious belief about same sex relationships are conveyed responsibly and sensitively.

6. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Representatives for different initiatives, e.g. school council, are formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different characteristics
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities depending on gender

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers.

We have achieved this by using the following:

- Feedback from the parent and pupil questionnaires, feedback from other activities (visitors, staff, parents, pupils), parents' evening
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons and Circle Times, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to school and learning
- Issues raised in termly SEND reviews or on IEPs
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings

8. Monitoring arrangements

In addition to the monitoring arrangements outlined above, the following monitoring arrangements will be in place:

- The headteacher, in accordance with the governing body will update the equality information we publish, at least every year
- This document will be reviewed by the governing body at least every 4 years
- This document will be approved by the headteacher and/or governing body

9. Equality objectives 2023 - 2027

Priority	Action Required	Success Criteria
To promote cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different beliefs between different groups within our community	• Implement the new Essex SACRE scheme of work for Religious Education • Ensure that teaching staff have a thorough RE subject knowledge and are trained to deliver effective RE lessons • Through ongoing curriculum review, identify areas where there are opportunities to develop an understanding of different cultures and ethnicities, and adapt planned work to address these areas • Share knowledge of different cultures and traditions associated with other countries, e.g. class presentations, parent visits, use of display • Celebrate cultural events throughout the year (e.g. Diwali, Christmas, Eid) to increase pupil awareness and understanding of different beliefs	• Pupils are provided with a curriculum that represents a diverse culture and society and encourages tolerance and respect. • Pupils develop a greater understanding of religions, beliefs, cultural events and traditions that are different to their own.

To monitor and analyse pupil achievement and attendance by FSM, race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.	• Using the new school information system, carry out analysis of both attainment data and attendance figures for different groups of pupils (FSM, race, gender, disability). Use findings to plan next steps, e.g. interventions, additional support, adaptations to the curriculum, classroom practice etc. • Monitor take up of after-school clubs and activities so that extended school activities take into account pupil needs and access issues	• Any differences in attainment or attendance for different groups of children are quickly identified and planned for accordingly • Pupils attending extra-curricular activities reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socioeconomic status.
To ensure that our curriculum reflects the rich diversities of the UK and our local area, in order to meet the needs of our children irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion.	• Ensure that the topics and resources used within the school curriculum reflect diversity • Regularly review and monitor the curriculum to ensure that topics and resources are up to date • Ensure that all children are accessing a diverse curriculum through high expectations and high-quality teaching to enable children to meet their full potential • Ensure the school reading spine incorporates books that address diversity and equality, giving pupils a wider experience of issues associated with gender, ethnicity, disability etc.	• Pupils are provided with a curriculum that represents a diverse society and encourages tolerance and respect, irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion.
To ensure that our staff have the appropriate knowledge and training about good equalities practice	• Continue to create a school environment where staff are supported and encouraged to address their own behaviours and use of language, to ensure that individuals or groups of pupils are not discriminated against. • Provide whole school training/updates on best practice, e.g. gender specific terminology, knowledge of cultural practices, avoidance of accidental 'micro-aggressions' etc.	• Staff have a clear understanding of good equalities practice, and continually model exemplary behaviours and use of language.