



Berkswell C of E School Equalities Policy – September 2024

Our Christian Vision

***Love
Togetherness
Aspiration***

Introduction

Berkswell C of E Primary School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and value all members of the school community.

At our school we believe that God is a community of love and the sense of togetherness that we aspire to create, celebrates individuality, ensuring everyone feels they belong. The value of each individual and the embracing of diversity plays a central part to the school's vision.

The avoidance of discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of gender, race, and disability is held to be of paramount importance in all areas of school life in respect of children and adults. The school is also totally committed to encouraging an understanding and appreciation of those of diverse and different backgrounds and cultures.

The Governing Body have a responsibility to ensure that decisions they take promote equality of opportunity and to monitor annually compliance with legislation on race, gender and disability.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships amongst staff and pupils. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Children's Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998 and other Equalities legislation.

As a school, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principal of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the Act covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees not for service provision)
- disability
- race
- sex
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

This policy statement outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Berkswell C of E 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.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community. The responsibility for keeping the issue of equal opportunity at a high level of priority at all times and in all areas, is that of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:-

1. All learners are of equal value whatever their ethnicity, culture, gender, race or faith background
2. We recognise, respect and value differences and understand that diversity can be a strength. We strive to remove barriers caused by differences in relation to disability, ethnicity gender and faith and celebrate this diversity and the contribution to school life.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships and actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups that are different from each other
4. We foster a shared sense of belonging so all members of the school community feel valued and actively participate in all aspects of school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff including our recruitment practices, promotion and continued professional development.
6. We have the highest expectations for all our children and expect that they all make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. We work to raise standards for all children with a special focus on the most vulnerable as their improved progress raises standards for the school as a whole.

Purpose of the Policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics which means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils and staff or treat them less favourably because of their gender, ethnicity, disability or faith.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires all public organisations to:-

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity;
- foster good relations amongst different groups.

Two “specific duties”

Schools are required to:-

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality duty.
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the school is meeting its statutory duties including guidance to governors and staff about promoting equality.

Our Equalities Policy

Ethos and Atmosphere

- The school’s ethos encourages positive relationships and appreciation of the worth of each individual, with this belief permeating work in and out of the classroom.
- Those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- Adults and 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.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies and classroom activities.

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 progress from all pupils.
- The adults in the school provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- 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.

The Curriculum

- All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, facilities and resources. The curriculum is responsive to individual need with the School's Inclusion Coordinator holding responsibility for those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. (See Inclusion Policy - SEN and G&T and Disability Equality Scheme).
- The school is Christian in its foundation. Equally, we recognise the need for children to learn about, understand and value different beliefs and cultures.
- Opportunities are taken across the curriculum to promote pupils' understanding of different faiths, cultures and societies (races and cultures). This is acknowledged to be of particular importance in respect of those races and cultures which are either not represented or scarcely represented in our school community. (See links to SMSC & Religious Education Policies).

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Berkswell C of E 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.

Language

We recognise that it is important at Berkswell C of E 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 policy

creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem

uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals

Extra-curricular provision

- All extra-curricular activities are available to all pupils. Where parental donations are requested for activities, no child is excluded because of financial hardship.
- It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible.

Provision for Bilingual pupils

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

- 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.

Staffing

- The appointment of staff will be based on the candidate's qualifications, aptitude and experience regardless of gender, race, colour or disability.
- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.
- 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.

Admissions.

- The admissions criteria apply equally to pupils of different race, gender or with disability.

Harassment and Bullying

- It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour.
- All racial incidents are recorded by the Headteacher and reported to governors at their meeting each term.

Community

- The school is also committed to forging links with the community. These are actively promoted, both in the immediate locality of the school and its wider environment. They are acknowledged to be an important way of increasing pupils' understanding of the society in which they live and enabling them to value the many and varied contributions of different individuals and sections of the community.

The Site and Building.

- Governors are committed to providing access for those with a disability, informing any decisions about building or improvements and maintenance. This is formalised in the development and review of the Disability and Accessibility Plan.

School Publications.

- These will avoid any stereotyping and reflect the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and constructive links with the community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Our Equalities policy will be monitored through :
 - continuous assessment of children’s progress and achievement at an individual level and in terms of gender, ethnicity, special educational need
 - SATs results
 - participation in extra-curricular activities
 - attendance
 - exclusions
 - racist and sexist incidents

Our Equality Objectives are:

- Improve the attendance of our vulnerable learners and in turn their attainment.
- Reduce the attainment gap in writing in KS2 between boys and girls.
- We will publish this policy on the school’s website to ensure that it is available to all interested parties.
- We will evaluate our success in meeting our Public Sector Equalities Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the targeted groups.
- We will review the Equality Objectives each academic year and review the policy every 3 years.

T Drew

Policy adopted by Governors November 2024

Date of next review November 2027