



EQUALITY

The Act came into law on 1st October 2010, although some provisions came into effect in 2011.

The Act replaces 9 separate acts and almost 100 sets of regulations in an attempt to reduce bureaucracy and to simplify. There will be few major differences for us. Schools are classed as responsible bodies and it is unlawful for us to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or employee, or potential pupil or employee.

This is in relation to any aspect of employment, admission, the education we provide, any benefit, facility or service we provide or by excluding individuals from our provision (service) or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope but how we deal with such issues is.

The Act establishes seven protected characteristics:

- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

It is unlawful to discriminate because of the protected characteristic of an individual or the protected characteristic of another person someone is associated with (e.g. a pupil's parent).

Age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment.

Unlawful behaviour can take the form of:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

The new provisions for schools are:

- It is unlawful to discriminate against a transsexual pupil
- It is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby
- It is unlawful to victimise a pupil for anything in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling

- New Positive Action provisions allow schools to target measures, which are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics
- The Act provides for schools to take on a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils – this will not come into effect until later
- The 'questions procedure' which enables a person thinking of bringing a complaint to issue a questionnaire seeking information about the alleged act of discrimination, now applies across the Act
- The three existing equality duties (race, disability, gender) will be combined into a single duty

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended in 2005)
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2006
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Duty to Promote Community Cohesion, Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

1. Aims and Values

Part of our fundamental ethos is equal opportunity for all to maximise their potential regardless of age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

We aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We seek to:

- Eliminate Discrimination
- Advance Equality of Opportunity
- Foster Good Relations

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our pupils can flourish, be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being
- provide a learning and working environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;

- prepare pupils for life in a diverse society in which young people are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of protected characteristics under the law (disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity);
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
- actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

To achieve these aims we will:

- involve stakeholders where appropriate in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all improvement plans, policies and procedures
- publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning
- 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:
- ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and employees

2. Leadership, Management and Governance

We are committed to:

- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity and eliminating any discrimination, harassment or discrimination
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution
- working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our **Equality Policy** is followed.

Responsibilities

It is the **Governing Body's** responsibility to:

- ensure that the School complies with equality legislation
- meet requirements to publish measurable equality objectives
- ensure that the School's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans
- scrutinise the recording and reporting procedures at least annually
- follow the admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

It is the **Headteacher's** responsibility to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with relevant policies and guidance
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the School's Equality Policy
- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

It is the responsibility of **all staff** to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the School for any type of harassment and bullying
- 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 the grounds of any protected characteristics
- 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.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body as required.

3. Policy Planning and Review

Policy planning and development

- In the planning and development stage of policy-making, we will ensure we have consulted and taken into account stakeholder views, as appropriate.
- All improvement plans will be designed with an element of impact assessment built in to monitor the success of each activity.
- All objectives will be specific and measurable with clear progress evaluation methods.
- There will be a systematic review of the impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity to address any areas of inequality (e.g. analysis of examination data.)
- Our target-setting processes ensure appropriate, challenging targets are set in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual pupils / cohorts (e.g. FSM pupils)

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- Each pupil's progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status.
- In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the School meets its duty to promote diversity positively. (E.g. Lesson observations, curriculum content)
- The impact of School policies on all aspects of access, admission and exclusion data will be considered.

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