

Equality Policy

Legal Framework

1. The Blue School welcomes its general duties under the 2010 Equality Act and the 2011 Equality Duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations,

in relation to age (for adults), disability, gender, gender identity/reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnicity, colour or national origin), religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

We also recognise our specific duties under the Equality Act to:

- Publish sufficient information to demonstrate our compliance with the general duties and,
 - Prepare and publish equality objectives (by 6th April 2012 and subsequently at intervals of not greater than four years).
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.

Our Overall Aims

4. We aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity through vision, strategy and practice
- involve people from different groups in the development and review of our equality work
- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination
- eliminate harassment and bullying
- ensure equality of opportunity for disadvantaged groups
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes for children and young people
- improve other outcomes where we identify inequality
- take positive action to meet needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment
- increase participation of under-represented groups in activities and public life
- promote positive attitudes and good relations between people from different groups and support community cohesion

Guiding principles

5. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners, parents/carers, governors and staff are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, and our governors and staff, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation or faith, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whether or not they are pregnant or mothers
- whatever their religious or non- or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation

Irrespective of other factors such as age, income or family circumstances

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 of the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made and needs met
- ethnicity, culture and religion so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised, and specific needs met
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised and met
- pregnancy and motherhood, so that different needs and experiences are recognised and met
- sexual orientation, so that different needs and experiences are recognised and met
- Factors such as age, income or family circumstances

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, women and men, people of different sexual orientation, and fair treatment for those who are pregnant or mothers, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment
- mutual respect and good relations between people from different age groups, with different incomes or different family circumstances

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
- whatever their age

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We use a social model of disadvantage, understanding that disadvantage is often caused by the structures, systems, attitudes and opinions of society as a whole, not by the people that suffer the disadvantage. Therefore, 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, people of different sexual orientation
- people from different age groups, with different incomes or different family circumstances

Principle 6: We recognise the need to consult and involve widely

We will 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.

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
- girls and boys, women and men, people who are pregnant or mothers and others
- people of different sexual orientation or gender identity

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence and openness about the issues that face us

We recognise the need to maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information (as appropriate) about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation and gender identity

We will also publish other information needed to show how we are meeting our duties to eliminate discrimination/harassment/victimisation, advance equality and promote good relations between different groups.

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 through which we have involved people from different groups (principle 7), in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation and gender identity

6. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.
7. Accordingly, we 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. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
8. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The Curriculum

9. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the nine principles set out above.

Ethos and Organisation

10. 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
- involvement in extra-curricular activities
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

11. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:
 - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
 - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
12. There is guidance for staff on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.
13. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of racial incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and Responsibilities

14. 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.
15. A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
16. 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.
17. A member of the Leadership Team has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
18. 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 within this document
 - support pupils in their class who have particular needs arising from disability, Special Educational Needs, or for whom English is an additional language or who are Travellers
 - keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and Resources

19. 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.

Religious Observance

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

Staff Development and Training

21. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams, to ensure that we are able to meet our obligations under the Equality Act.

Breaches of the Policy

22. 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 and Evaluation

23. We collect, study and use quantitative data and qualitative evidence relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
24. In particular we collect, analyse and use data on achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, and gender.

Meeting our specific duties under the 2010 Equality Act

25. We publish information annually on our school website to show that we have complied with our general duties under the Act.
26. We set equality objectives and review annually our progress towards them. For the period from April 2017 to March 2021 our equality objectives are:
 - to close the attainment gap between students in disadvantaged groups and others.
 - to close the attendance gap between students in disadvantaged groups and others.
 - to improve the attainment of boys in English
 - to reduce exclusion rates for students in disadvantaged groups and those with SEND