

# Tennyson Road Infant School Single Equality Policy.

**March 2012.**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

This Single Equality Policy is part of the school's Single Equality Scheme which also includes a Self Evaluation Framework and resulting actions to be incorporated into the School Development Plan.

This Single Equality Policy sets out the school's generic approach to the Single Equality Duty (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission) to secure equality with regard to (currently) race, disability, gender, (and, forthcoming, age, sexual orientation, and religion/belief.) In setting out the school's responses to these duties, this policy also indirectly reflects many of the school's approaches to the promotion of Community Cohesion. Section 5 of this policy ("The school's approach to promoting equality for all") pulls together the duties for race, disability and gender and presents them in a generic way.

Our school's mission statement/core values/aims are as follows :

## **To learn and grow together - to be the best that we can be**

At Tennyson Road Infant School, we strive to enable children to develop academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually, by providing a safe, secure, challenging and stimulating learning environment. Children are encouraged to respect and value themselves and others, to grow and develop into self-confident, aspiring citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Tennyson Road Infant School is committed to ensuring that we do not discriminate against anyone, be they adult or child, on the grounds of their race, nationality, disability or special educational need, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief. This is in line with the 1976 Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act of 2006 and the Equality Act 2011 and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

Our over-riding consideration is to :

- celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups
- provide a supportive, inclusive and empowering learning community for all pupils and adults.

The school recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all potentially vulnerable groups of learners are helped to fulfil their potential, including:

- Boys and girls, men and women
- All minority ethnic groups including Gypsy Roma Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Pupils and others with special educational needs
- Pupils and others with a range of disabilities
- Looked After Children and their carers
- Children with poor records of attendance at school
- Young offenders
- Young carers
- Children at risk from significant harm
- Children living with "vulnerable" adults

In our school, regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the attainment and achievement of vulnerable groups and individuals enables us to highlight areas where additional intervention may be needed.

This policy, and the process of self evaluation which informs the resultant action plan is the responsibility of

- Miss C Hall

and its effectiveness is regularly evaluated by

- Miss C Hall (Headteacher)
- Tim Pack (Governor)

## **2. THE LEGAL DUTIES**

This document is written with very close reference to three key documents :

"Developing Equality Schemes to meet the three existing duties" : Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2009)

"Developing a Single Equality Policy for your school" : Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (2010)

It is also written in compliance with the following legal frameworks :

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- The Employment Equality Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Part 2) (2006)
- Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified by UK in 1969)
- Articles 2, 23, 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK in 1991)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Disability Equality Duty (2006)
- Article 24 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified by UK in 2009)
- The Gender Equality Duty (2007)
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender re-assignment) Regulations (2003)
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007)
- Articles 10, 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratified by UK in 1986)
- The Equality Act 2011

## **3 THE SCHOOL CONTEXT**

a) Significant features of the social, cultural, linguistic, religious, disability diversity of pupils, staff and governors are as follows :

- *5% of our school population have a race background other than White British.*
- *Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and some poor role modelling for boys in some of our families*
- *Low parental support or different parental expectations in relation to pupils with disability.*
- *Timing, scheduling and location of Governors meetings deter some possible governors.*

b) These features are representative of the population in the geographical area the school covers in the following ways :

- *The local area has a significant percentage of households in which no adult has regular work.*

c) Reasonable adjustments made by our school to ensure that the equal opportunity of pupils, staff and governors is ensured with regard to race, disability or special educational need, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief are as follows

*Recognising that some groups covered in this policy may have particular needs the school:*

- *Is physically accessible to all, including wheelchair users, with ramps and lower access buttons usually in place where needed and door clips in place to allow doors to remain open where needed*
- *Has completed an access action plan to consider changes that would need to be made on the arrival of a pupil or member of staff with a physical disability*
- *Works closely with outside support agencies to ensure the most effective support is in place (e.g Speech and language therapists & physiotherapist)*
- *Provides support and time for any physical intervention programs to be completed successfully*
- *Completes specific, targeted training to enable staff to meet the needs of individuals (eg Eppi Pen- whole school)*
- *Purchases and uses a range of specific equipment to enhance learning and support (to allow different seating arrangements, foot stools, writing wedges etc)*
- *Provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities to allow choice and access for all.*

*Supporting learners with particular needs*

*Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs the school:*

- *Supports individual/families with difficulties over a given period of time (family crisis etc) using a mentoring or counselling approach (HT/ Family Worker)*
- *Strives to identify particular needs as soon as possible to enable early support and/or intervention to take place*
- *Prepares Individual Education/Behaviour Plans to focus on learning priorities*
- *Provides extra support time with an LSA(learning support assistant) in a group or 1:1 to help pupils meet their targets*

d) Staff turnover, pupil mobility and upward or downward trends in relation to % of staff, pupils and governors from different racial groups, with a disability or special educational need, from each

gender, (or who fall into groups for whom the school needs to give consideration to age, sexual orientation and religion/belief.

- *Staff turnover is 5% per year for last 3 years - no particular equality group issues emerge from the analysis of joiners and leavers.*
- *Pupil mobility is at 18% (January Census data 2012) 3 year rising trend - increase - pupils with statements and with specific needs -1% and 13% respectively)*
- *School has made efforts to tackle inaccurate identification of some underachieving pupils as SEN (special educational needs) and therefore has reduced % of pupils identified as School Action. Slight rise in pupils at School Action Plus over last three years.*
- *Boy/girl balance remains more or less static over last 3 years - 4% more boys than girls.*
- *Two members of staff recruited in last three years from ethnic groups other than White British*

e) Attainment and progress of pupils who would identify themselves (or, in terms of special educational need, be identified) as belonging to different groups according to race, disability or special educational need, gender, (and, forthcoming) age, sexual orientation and religion/belief is better than that of the school population as a whole, in the following ways (using the last complete year of whole-school performance data) :

- *Girls outperform boys in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However on entry baseline data shows that girls enter school ahead of boys in these areas and most already have the PSED skills to continue learning at a steady rate. Consequently one of the main foci of the reception classes and throughout the whole school is firmly on raising personal and social skills (to increase receptiveness to new learning) as well as awareness and skills in CLLD in all of our children, but most particularly in our boys - eg sharing, building concentration, awareness and observation of classroom rules and boundaries, consideration for others - both adult and peer, speaking and listening, enjoyment of story and rhyme and developing fine motor skills. This has resulted in a narrowing of the gap by the end of Year 2.*
- *The progress of children from identified groups is tracked and monitored termly to ensure that any intervention that is needed is promptly put into place.*
- *Pupils on school action plus and with statements of special educational needs make good progress.*

f) Examples of how we seek the views of all our school community, and the wider community, including in relation to equality issues, are as follows :

- *Consultation with parents about specific aspects (homework, websites, educational visits etc.)*
- *Consultation with children about specific aspects (Playground partnership, Outdoor Environment, Website etc.) Often via the School Council of classroom elected children.*
- *Regular Parent, Pupil and Staff Questionnaires where data produced is thoroughly analysed and relevant outcomes fed into our School Improvement Plan*
- *Ongoing "listening" to children via School Council Meetings*
- *Evaluation of pre-admission information*
- *Evenings for Parents arranged for specific key stages in school life to allow parents to ask questions, share opinions and concerns and regularly enter into dialogue with the appropriate staff team members:*

- *Workshops for parents to help them to understand what and how their children will be taught.*

*Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible our school strives to:*

- *Explain how the school operates via our School Brochure and website*
- *Offer a range of ways of communicating between school and parents that meet parents' circumstances and needs including: text messaging service, school website and e mail, written reports, Parents' Evenings, Whole school open days to which parents, grandparents and potential new parents are invited, evenings for Parents (for specific cohorts such as FS prior to starting school and year 2 prior to SATs) and transition visits by parents to their child's teacher for the next school year.*
- *Run a thriving Parent/carer and tots group in response to a need in the local community.*
- *Explain how parents and others can help in school by encouraging their involvement in school life and compiling a list of very valuable parent helpers who are given a Welcome and Initial Training session before they join us in the classroom*
- *Encourage parents to support their child in homework via home school communication, shared reading records and "Challenge at Home" activities*
- *Develop parents' understanding of the curriculum by offering Key Stage specific curriculum evenings for parents which keep them informed of new initiatives and school practice*
- *Keep parents informed of school even where we feel they are unlikely to engage.*
- *Designate a SMT(senior management team) member to deal more personally with families experiencing difficulties or crisis over a period of time*
- *Employ a Parent Support Worker to jointly address attendance and other issues*
- *Encourage parents to join the governing body*
- *Providing termly IEP (Individual Education Programme) meetings for parents and all school staff involved in the learning of children with specific individual needs to come together to report on their progress and plan future targets as a team.*
- *Encourage an "open door" policy where parents feel comfortable to come in to chat to teachers or the SMT members when they have concerns or questions*
- *Arrange weekly meetings for parents of children feeling vulnerable or experiencing specific barriers to their learning/wellbeing (often of a temporary nature).*

g) Some examples (not a definitive list) of how we seek to address equality issues in our school and improve the access and experience of all equality groups, are as follows :

- *Celebrate individual and personal success in a weekly celebration assembly*
- *Develop global curriculum coverage which celebrates difference.*
- *Through having gained International School's Intermediate award and now beginning to work towards full ISA(International Schools Award) status through establishing communication with schools in other countries*
- *Through a member of staff attending an international study conference in Poland to share and benefit from knowledge and expertise from educational professionals across Europe about assessment.*
- *Integration of SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning) across the school*
- *Deliver a PSHCE(Personal, social, health, emotional and citizenship) curriculum which promotes positive attitudes towards minority groups*

- *Communicate a bullying policy which encourages and develops empathy, tolerance and understanding and reacts swiftly to unacceptable behaviours against minority groups, recording and monitoring these incidents.*
- *Offering a wide range of extra-curricular clubs to include sports and the arts*
- *Provide assemblies led by church leaders, charity fund-raisers, the police etc.*
- *Fund raising for local, national and international charities and ensuring understanding of the purpose and impact of the activity through our curriculum*
- ***Ensuring a rich and relevant curriculum which celebrates diversity and cultural similarities and differences.*** *In our development of a rich and flexible curriculum we strive to ensure that the curriculum equips pupils to actively promote community cohesion and ensures their understanding of faith and ethnic diversity and the common values underpinning society. E.g.*
  - *Through our RE(religious education) Scheme of Work which explores all the main religions, as well as the achievements and motivations of those inspired by their faith, their sense of moral duty or commitment to active citizenship*
  - *Through PSHCE and the SEAL programme we encourage children to be reflective and empathetic, continually considering the impact of their decisions and behaviours on others and to be aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights*
  - *Through taking our children to lead a Carol Service in the Retirement Home each year and entertain residents with singing and other performances throughout the year*
  - *Through creative curriculum themes and special curriculum events which allow us to celebrate and explore cultural identity*
  - *Through assemblies which balance the PSHCE programme with a range of faiths*
  - *Through visits to places of worship, such as the local church and visitors to our school representative of different religious beliefs.*

## **4 RATIONALE**

This Single Equality Policy is not a stand-alone document. Its main function is to present a set of principles which permeate all other school policies and practices. It is closely related to other key school documents as follows :

- Gender Equality Policy
- Disability Equality Policy
- Racial Equality Policy
- Good Behaviour Policy
- Antibullying Policy

As a school, we recognise that there are some core inclusive values that underpin this Single Equality Policy and ensure respect for all. These are :

- **Fairness** : no school policy or procedure will unfairly advantage or disadvantage any member of the school community.

- **Trust** : we begin with the premise that all members of the school community will behave with good intent towards each other.
- **Participation** : no member of our school community will be barred in any way from participating in any school activity which could be reasonably expected to be open to all. For those school activities where it would be common practice to be chosen or elected, (ie representation at a meeting, on a committee, on the school council or on the Governing Body) we will be able to demonstrate that the selection process was fair and transparent (see below).
- **Consultation and negotiation** : Representatives of different stakeholder groups within the school community (ie pupils, staff, parents, governors) and of all seven identified diversity groups covered by this policy (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief) will be consulted over major policy decisions being taken by the school. The school will make an "equality impact assessment" in relation to any major policy decision. In some situations, where it is reasonable to predict that the ultimate decision will have a significant impact upon the experience in school of different stakeholders, including those within the seven identified groups, the school recognises that it will be appropriate to negotiate, rather than consult.
- **Collaboration** : we will work together as a team in which every member has a view and a voice which is worthy of consideration.
- **Transparency** : the reasoning behind decisions made in our school will be open and subject to scrutiny.

We strive to build, within our school, our locality and the partnerships with which we are involved, a strong and cohesive community, which prepares young people for adult life in

- a diverse, inclusive society
- a welcoming community that fosters positive relationships and values diversity as a rich learning resource
- a barrier-free community founded upon a joint sense of belonging.

We strive to nurture in our pupils and staff the personal qualities which we consider essential in a member of a school community and in a citizen of the wider community and society which values equality and respect for all :

- thoughtfulness
- honesty
- integrity
- caring
- kindness
- responsibility
- humility.

**Every member of our school community will be challenged and held to account for upholding the rationale of this Single Equality Policy.** We recognise that individual members of staff, governors, parents or pupils may have different views on a number of equality issues. Our main priority is not to demand that anyone changes their views but that, as a school, we clearly describe what the school considers acceptable/unacceptable and how everyone is expected to behave in school. No matter what individual people's views might be, our first priority is to ensure that the school complies with every aspect of equality legislation and the duty to promote community cohesion.

## **5. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR ALL**

Our school works in the following ways to secure equality and respect for all (these principles apply to all seven equality duties) :

**a) Current policy and practice in the school shows commitment to meeting the duty to promote race, disability, gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that our mission statement, aims and core values relate to every member of our school community.
- Ensuring that we regularly evaluate the impact of all school policies (particularly admissions and attendance, behaviour, collective worship, target-setting, teaching and learning and performance management) on the equality groups as identified in this policy and take action to improve our policy and practice where necessary, through having specific actions on the school development plan.
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, the equality groups as identified in this policy are reflected in the language and images of all publications (including the school prospectus, publicity to promote school events, website).
- Ensuring that the school's policy on school uniform makes reasonable allowances for expressions of identity and ease of use for pupils who are disabled ("reasonable allowances" to be limited by the extent to which adaptation of the school uniform might be used to represent an affiliation to a group or belief which might not be in keeping with the other key principles laid out in this policy.)
- Ensuring that, wherever possible and without artificiality or unbalanced representation, there are positive images of the equality groups as identified in this policy, in school policies, in school publications, in learning resources and in displays.
- Ensuring that the school has clear, commonly understood processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice.
- Ensuring that equality values are represented in the every day language and behaviour evident in school and that senior leaders regularly monitor the school climate in relation to this, in order that tolerance levels in relation to language or behaviour are maintained.
- Ensuring that the school makes the strongest possible efforts to minimise any barrier to the participation and engagement of parents with regard to their child's development and in other aspects of school life.

**b) The school can clearly demonstrate how it assesses the impact on equalities of its current policies and practices on race, disability and gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that the school has consistent and reliable procedures for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour towards the equality groups as identified in this policy.

- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

**c) The school has secure arrangements for ensuring equality of opportunity with regard to the recruitment, development and retention of employees. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that, whilst adhering to equalities law and fair recruitment practice, every attempt is made to achieve diversity in the workforce and governing body which is representative of that within the school, the local community and the wider community.
- Ensuring that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues, complaints, allocation of responsibilities, professional development and opportunities for all staff to progress are monitored to ensure that equality is upheld as a central consideration when judgments and decisions are made.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this Single Equality policy and wider equality issues through staff training and professional development and that this is an essential element of the induction training for all staff.

**d) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to the educational opportunities available to the pupils in the specified groups. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that there are opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard.
- Ensuring that, where possible and appropriate and without contrivance or artificiality, curriculum themes and content reflect the rights and interests of the equality groups as identified in this policy and promote greater tolerance towards them, across a breadth of curriculum which is wider than planned direct teaching within RE, PSHCE and citizenship.
- Ensuring that the curriculum offers opportunities for all pupils to learn about the history of inequality and oppression in relation to the equality groups as identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that all of the equality groups as identified in this policy have the same opportunity to access educational visits and other school trips as any other pupil in the school.
- Ensuring that all pupils can participate equally in all aspects of school life, including extended school activities.
- Ensuring that school events or activities, including those arising from the extended school offer, celebrate diversity.

**e) The school can demonstrate equality of opportunity with regard to the achievements of pupils in the specified groups. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring that the school has processes for monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of all pupils and the comparative attainment and achievement of pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy. Thereafter ensuring, where there are discrepancies, that appropriate intervention is put into place which will narrow the gap between the attainment and

achievement of all pupils and of those pupils from the equality groups identified within this policy, where these are lower and need to be addressed.

**f) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to attendance, exclusion and anti-bullying. Our school addresses this by :**

- Ensuring it has effective attendance, behaviour and anti-bullying policies which are applied equally to all groups and do not disadvantage any member of our school community.
- Ensuring that the school has processes for avoiding the exclusion of any pupil and that these processes are equally applied to and equally effective for pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school can clearly demonstrate the steps it takes to eliminate harassment and bullying of pupils or staff in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

**g) The school's links with local organisations and community groups represent its commitment to raising the awareness of its pupils, staff and parents with regard to the equality groups identified in this policy.**

- Ensuring that the school has links or partnerships with other schools, colleges, local or national groups, charities and organisations which also promote equality.
- Ensuring that the school does not have links, partnerships or connections with local or national groups or organisations which overtly promote prejudice or intolerance or, in the way in which they operate, exclude or disenfranchise members of any of the equality groups identified in this policy.

**h) With specific regard to disability equality:**

- Ensure that the school recognises the "social model" of disability - that a person who has an impairment may become disabled if reasonable adjustments are not provided in relation to that impairment (and is therefore a "disabled person") - over and above the "medical model" - that a person is disabled by physical or mental impairments (and is therefore a "person with disabilities").
- With particular regard to disability: ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered in order to include all disabled young people living within the school's locality.

## **6. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING IMPACT**

- The Single Equality **Scheme** (which incorporates this policy as one of its three elements) will be reviewed on a three year cycle. The working party will include the following stakeholders:
  - Pupils
  - Parents

- Staff
  - Governors
  - Representatives of the local community (which could be community governors if they are representative of the main local equality groups).
- Our school will judge the effectiveness of this Equality **Scheme** by :
    - using the Single Equality Scheme Self Evaluation Framework,
    - by evaluating progress towards equality targets as specified on the School Development Plan (and their impact)
    - by canvassing the views of the stakeholders listed above (perhaps through questionnaires or focus groups).
  - The working party will decide how this is to be evaluated and how the results will be used to improve the policy and its implementation. Evidence of impact will include :
    - Comparative attainment and overall progress of pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy.
    - Pupils' learning and awareness of equality issues and how they demonstrate these, so they are well prepared for adult life in a diverse and inclusive society.
    - Feedback from parents, staff and other community users on the culture of equality within the school.

## **7 ACTION PLANNING**

Our school recognises that it is a legal requirement to develop specific targets for each of the equality duties. These will be incorporated but clearly identified in the School Development Plan.

## **8 PREVENTING AND DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Our school recognises that the groups covered in this policy may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment and all acts of reported bullying are acted upon swiftly, recorded and reported to parents (whenever this is identified as advantageous or necessary).

They are analysed with a view to monitoring vulnerable groups. Incidents of racism are reported to the Local Authority.

Where the behaviour of a child is cause for concern, an individual behaviour plan is created alongside the SEN Manager, class teacher and parents. Outside agencies are involved when this is considered advantageous. This ensures progress towards appropriate targets is most effectively managed.

Members of the Senior Management team act as Behaviour Mentors for children who need more structured support.

Our approach to behaviour management is based on strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect. This helps us to protect the most vulnerable whilst supporting and enabling all children to develop positive behaviour patterns.

## **9. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

The head teacher and Chair of Governors will maintain a strategic overview of the currency and efficacy of this Single Equality Scheme. Leads for each target on the School Development Plan will be clearly identified. The cycle for review of progress towards the equality targets on the School Development Plan will be clearly laid out and will follow that for the plan as a whole.

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