

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

Ditton Nursery School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

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 1988.

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

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all children can make good progress and achieve their highest potential
- 7. We work to raise standards for all children, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of children raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against children or treat them less favourably because of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to children.

The Act requires all public organisations, including school to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to;

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to;

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by 6th April 2012
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by 6th April 2012

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation:

We have a number of policies, including this one, which support our intention to eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act:

- SEN
- Anti-bullying
- Whistle blowing
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We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions; the way we provide education for our children and the way we provide access for children to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment Duty for Disabled Children – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled children and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against children by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and if necessary will take action to reduce incidents.

What are we doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, and outside agencies, to identify children who have a disability or special educational need.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of children and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps.

We collect and analyse data:

- On the school population by gender and ethnicity

Ditton Nursery School

- On the % of children identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability
- On inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future children. Through liaison without outside agencies, parents, carers and other professionals we aim to be sufficiently prepared if for example a visually impaired, hearing impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller child joins our school.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any child's achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners such as "less able".

We use a range of teaching strategies to ensure that we meet the needs of all children. We make appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities. We acknowledge that children have different learning styles and cater for these accordingly, both indoors and out.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all children to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of children with particular protected characteristics. SEND children are tracked and their needs are identified early, SEN support plans are written with parents and advice from outside agencies is sought and acted upon. If necessary we can apply for additional funding from the LA and this is carefully monitored through clear action plans.

We provide support to children at risk of underachieving, for example, specific small group speech and language support. A bank of resources to support this work is being developed.

We have undergone an Early Childhood Environmental Rating (ECERS) audit which has supported us in looking at our use of resources to develop an understanding of diversity, disability, gender and age.

Actions taken are designed to meet the schools Equality Objectives

What we are doing to foster good relationships

We prepare our children for life in a diverse society, ensuring that the curriculum offered is carefully planned to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as towards people who are different from themselves. We encourage children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. Policies already identified support this.

Staff consider the use of resources carefully – to broaden children's experiences and to challenge any misconceptions. This includes play materials, books, posters and pictures.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures. We include the contribution of different cultures, and promote positive images of people.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, visitors, equipment, whole school events eg, Children in Need, use of smartboard technology etc.

Other ways we address equality issues

We maintain records of all training relating to equality, and these are reported termly to the governing body.

We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.

We have a rolling programme of reviewing all our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on progress, safety and well being of our children.

The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaires, stay and play sessions etc
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- Analyse issues raised in Child Review meetings or reviews of progress on SEN Support Plans

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved for the different groups.

Our Equality Objectives for 2014 – 2016 are:

- Continue to strengthen the links with Ashley School and develop links with Chesnut Lodge so that the children have a chance to play and socialise, hence fostering a greater understanding of the differing needs of children in our society
- To broaden the resources we have which support children's understanding of diversity, equality, gender and age
- To develop our links with the other users of Ditton Community allotments, thus creating relationships with a range of different groups within the local community.
- To join with Children's Centre staff for any training opportunities related to equality.

We produce an Equality Action Plan which shows how we will achieve our objectives. This forms part of our School Development Plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every 2 years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, children, governors and parents and carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

Governing body

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.

Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's equalities work taking account of quantitative evidence (eg data) and qualitative evidence (eg surveys)

Headteacher and Assistant Head

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that the staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

Both the headteacher and assistant head have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver experiences that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all children
- Support different groups of children through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find something difficult
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

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

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.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate.

APPENDIX ONE

Checklist for school staff and governors:

- ✓ The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both children and staff, eg, pupil attainment, attendance, and staff training. This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides.
- ✓ The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties.
- ✓ The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when the trends or patterns indicate a need.
- ✓ The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- ✓ A senior member of staff has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- ✓ The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- ✓ The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- ✓ The curriculum includes opportunities for all children to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- ✓ The school monitors bullying and harassment of children in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern.
- ✓ Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the community.
- ✓ Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions
- ✓ The school environment is increasingly accessible to children, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment
- ✓ Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered.
- ✓ The accessibility needs of parents, children and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information