

Folksworth Church of England (VC) Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy



Inspiring a love of learning through
the bonds of family, faith and friendship.

Date: June 2023

Review date: June 2025

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

'We believe that all people are unique and of equal worth. As part of God's family everyone is nurtured, valued and respected. We provide a safe community where we give everyone the fullest opportunity to be the very best they can be.'

(school vision statement)

At Folksworth Church of England (VC) Primary School we understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth valuing their particular characteristics such as their age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic circumstances. We further understand that people have different needs, situations and goals and therefore achieving equality requires the removal of discriminatory barriers that limit what people, especially children and young people can do and can be. We recognise that inequality can be experienced in a variety of ways such as through outcomes, access to services, the degree of independence to make decisions affecting lives and inequality of treatment, including in relation to employment, through direct and indirect discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions or systems intentionally or inadvertently.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations outlined further on in this scheme, we at Folksworth Church of England (VC) Primary School are guided by seven principles.

Principle 1: All members of the school and wider community are of equal value

We see all members of the school and wider community of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or socio-economic circumstances.
- Whichever their gender and sexual orientation
- Whatever their age

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds/experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender and sexual orientation so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised.
- Age

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 socio-economic circumstances, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

- Promote positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships.

Principle 4: We will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our school's vision and values

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 socio-economic circumstance
- Whichever their gender and sexual orientation
- Whatever their age

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

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, 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 and socio-economic backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
- Age (where appropriate)

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious and socio-economic backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
- Age

Principle 7: We feel that the community 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 and socio-economic backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
- People of different ages and between generations

Principles in themselves are not enough

In the light of the principles stated above, we have identified practical priorities and plans of specific action, in order to promote equality in:

- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief
- Age
- Socio-economic circumstances

THE CURRICULUM

4. We will actively seek opportunities to review the curriculum and curriculum subject or areas in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles outlined above.

5. We will ensure staff are offered the opportunity to engage in appropriate training and development to support the achievement of the seven principles.

ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

6. We ensure that the principles listed above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- Learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- Learners' and staff personal development, welfare and well-being
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Admissions and attendance
- Staff and governor recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community
- Participation of groups in wider school activities
- Preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society

ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

7. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling legal duties for all aspects of equality:

- 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, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

8. Prejudice-related incidents are identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with through CPOMs.

9. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with in line with existing and future legal requirements.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10. The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with current legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

11. The head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff, governors and visitors are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

12. A senior member of staff, Michelle Norbury, Headteacher, has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

13. All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Challenge and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language

- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work
- Ensure pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard with regards to equality issues

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

14. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents and carers.

15. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate details.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

16. 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

17. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff and governors receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

BREACHES OF POLICY

18. Breaches of this scheme will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the head teacher and governing body.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

19. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

20. In particular we collect, analyse and use data relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special education needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin, socio-economic circumstances, gender and age.

21. To review good practice we make use of a range of auditing schedules.

LEGAL DUTIES

1. We welcome our duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Disability Discriminations Acts 1995 and 2005; and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006 and the Equalities Act 2010.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these four sets of duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework, and they 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.
4. Summaries of our legal obligations under the three main equality strands of disability, ethnicity and gender are outlined below. After each of the three equality strands we have also outlined the outstanding key issues for our school to address as priorities for the forthcoming

three years, which will be included in our Equality Action Plan as well highlighting the successful impact we have already had in our school.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The legal frameworks:

Equality impact assessments of new policies have been required since 2002 in the case of ethnicity, since 2006 in the case of disability, and since 2007 in the case of gender. The requirements are contained within frameworks which distinguish between a) 'the general duty' and b) 'specific duties'. A further distinction is drawn between a) specific duties concerned with policy development and service delivery and b) those concerned with employment.

The three main frameworks are summarised in below. As first published, they are:

The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005

Statutory Instrument 2005 No. 2966

The Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001

Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 3458

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Order 2006

Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 29

The above regulations have now been replaced by the Equality Act 2010

DISABILITY EQUALITY

The general duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a general duty of public authorities to promote disability equality. The duty came into force on 4 December 2006 and required public authorities to: (now replaced by the Equality Policy 2010)

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably.

Specific duties

The specific duties relating to policy development & service delivery require public authorities to: produce and publish a disability equality scheme (DES) demonstrating how they intend to fulfil their general and specific duties

- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme
- Produce an action plan setting out the key actions an authority will take to promote disability equality
- Explain the methods they use for assessing the impact of their policies and practices, or the likely impact of their proposed policies and practices, on equality for disabled persons
- Assess and consult on the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of disability equality.
- Monitor policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of disability equality
- Publish the results of these assessments, consultation and monitoring
- Report annually on the progress of the action plan
- Review the scheme every three years

The specific duty covering an authority's role as an employer is to monitor the effect of its policies and practices on disabled persons, and in particular the effect on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees,

RACE EQUALITY

In 2001, the Race Relations Act 1976 was amended to give public authorities a new statutory duty to promote race equality. This has now been replaced by the Equality Act 2010.

The general duty

The general duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Specific duties

The specific duties relating to policy development and service delivery are to do with the content of a race equality scheme (RES). Schemes should set out an authority's functions and policies, or proposed policies that are assessed as relevant to the general duty to promote ethnicity equality and should set out an authority's arrangements for:

- Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality
- Monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality
- Publishing the results of such assessments and consultation
- Ensuring public access to information about the services that it provides
- Training staff in connection with the general and specific duties
- Reviewing the scheme every three years
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The specific duties covering an authority's role as an employer are to:

- Monitor by ethnicity the numbers of staff in post and the applicants for employment, training and promotion.
- Monitor by ethnicity the numbers of staff who receive training; benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures; are involved in grievance procedures; are the subject of disciplinary procedures; cease employment
- Report and publish annually the results of staff monitoring, and actions taken towards achievements of overall ethnicity equality objectives.

GENDER EQUALITY

The general duty

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to: (replaced by the Equality Act 2010)

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Specific duties

The specific duties relating to policy development and service delivery require public authorities to:

- Produce and publish a gender equality scheme (now part of this Equality Policy) setting out their gender equality objectives
- Gather and use information on how their policies and practices affect gender equality
- Assess the impact of their policies and practices, or the likely impact of their proposed policies and practices, on equality between men and women
- Consult stakeholders in the development of the scheme
- Assess functions and policies, or proposed policies, which are relevant to gender equality
- Implement the actions set out in the scheme within three years
- Report annually on the progress of the action plan
- Review the scheme every three years

The specific duties covering an authority's role as an employer are to:

- Consider the need to have objectives that address the causes of any differences between the pay of men and women that are related to their sex

- Gather and use information on how its policies and functions affect gender equality in the workforce.

COMMUNITY COHESION

Since September 2007 all schools have had a duty to contribute to working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the work place, in schools and in the wider community.

We at Folksworth C of E (VC) Primary School make this contribution by creating opportunities, through the curriculum and otherwise, for pupils to interact with those from different backgrounds to themselves to enrich their understanding of community and diversity.

We recognise that a school's community is defined in 4 dimensions:

- The school community
- The community within which the school is located
- The UK community
- The global community

We understand that there are links between this duty and the duty to promote equality, although each has a distinctive focus.

We recognise that our school's contribution to community cohesion should be organised under three main headings:

1. Teaching, learning and curriculum

- Helping children and young people to learn to understand others
- To value diversity whilst also promoting shared values
- To promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them
- To develop the skills of participation and responsible action
- PSHE and Citizenship includes aspects of the global community
- In RE all children visit places of worship to promote respect and understanding

2. Equity and excellence

- To ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible
- Striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities
- Working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups

3. Engagement of extended services

- To provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds
- Build positive relations
- Receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups
- School invites parents from different backgrounds to support curriculum

EQUALITY ACT 2020 AND OTHER EXISTING EQUALITY LEGISLATION

We at Folksworth C of E (VC) Primary School will also comply with and have due regard to the following equalities legislation:

- New Equality Act 2020

The Equality bill became an Act on the 8th April 2010, taking effect from Autumn 2010. The Equality Act has put a new single Equality duty on public bodies. The duty requires public bodies to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, regardless of race or ethnicity, or any other protected characteristic such as disability or religion.

The act protects people from discrimination on the basis of “protected characteristics” (previously called grounds). The relevant characteristics for services and public functions are:

- Disability (definition changed)

The protected characteristic of disability applies to a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

To qualify for protection from discrimination a disabled person no longer has to show that their impairment affects a particular “capacity” such as mobility or speech, hearing or eyesight. Direct discrimination has been extended to cover disability.

- Gender re-assignment (definition changed)

The protected characteristic of gender re-assignment will apply to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their sex.

To qualify for protection from discrimination a transsexual person no longer has to show that they are under medical supervision as it is considered a personal process rather than a medical process which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

- Pregnancy and maternity (no change)

Pregnancy and maternity is not a protected characteristic for the purposes of the schools provisions but it is covered by other requirements which means that the schools are prohibited from restricting access to education on the grounds of pregnancy/maternity.

- Race (no change)

Race includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality. People can belong to one or more of these groups at the same time and the one which is relevant to a particular situation depends on the circumstances.

- Religion or belief (no change)

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion or belief and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes any lack of such religion or belief. Religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as a religion, although it must be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Faith schools and educational institutions with a religious ethos may in some limited circumstances favour pupils or students because of the religion.

- Sex (no change)

A person’s sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. You must not treat a woman or a girl worse than you would treat a man or a boy. You must not treat a man or boy worse than you would treat a woman or girl in the same circumstances.

- Sexual orientation (no change)

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation whether they are straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with expressions or manifestations of a person’s sexual orientation. That may include someone’s appearance, the places they visit or the people they associate with.

- Age (no change)

Under the schools provision of the Act age is excluded from the list of protected characteristics.

An integrated public sector Equality duty encourages public bodies to address the needs of groups experiencing disadvantage or discrimination on a number of grounds including the new socio-economic duty. It also extends the use of positive action in the workplace. Further clarity regarding these issues and many others, particularly in relation to employment matters are likely to be much clearer when the codes of practice are published in January 2011.

The Employment Equality Regulations 2003 protects employees from discrimination because of their actual or perceived religion or belief.

Discrimination is unlawful in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Terms and conditions of employment offered and or applied
- Opportunities for training, training itself, job promotions and transfers
- Harassment and victimisation
- Dismissal, including redundancy
- Post employment, for example provision of references

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the subsequent Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 protect employees and consumers from discrimination because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Once seen as a peripheral issue of little relevance to the core business of public bodies, sexual identity has been brought centre stage by legislative and societal developments. The Equality Bill will mean that public authorities will have a single public duty, which will extend the current public duties to age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment. It also includes pregnancy and maternity. Public authorities will have a duty to promote 'positive' action'.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The purpose of the Act is to provide transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender. Legal recognition follows from the issue of a full gender recognition certificate (GRC) by a gender recognition panel. The holder of a GRC is not obliged to inform their employer that they have one, but if they choose to do so this information on their gender history must be established as protected information. Trans people are protected by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended by the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1992 and the Sex Discrimination (Amendment of Legislation) Regulations 2008

Human Rights Act 1988 and Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights

Article 14 refers to the prohibition of discrimination and states that the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set form in the Conventions shall be secured without discrimination on any grounds such as "sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status"

Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006 came into force in April 2007 and makes it unlawful for providers of goods, facilities and services to discriminate in grounds of religion or belief.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006

This came into force in October 2006 and it protects against discrimination on grounds of age in employment and vocational training. Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate. The regulations cover recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissal and training.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Made under section 81 of the Equality Act 2006, the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007, make it unlawful for providers of goods, facilities or services to discriminate under grounds of sexual identity.