



Equal Opportunities Policy

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Related policies:	▪ Accessibility plan ▪ Admissions policy ▪ Behavior and anti-bullying policy ▪ Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct ▪ Uniform policy ▪ Special Education Needs and learning policy ▪ Complaints policy

1. Introduction and purpose

1.1. This policy is for Old Park Primary School

1.2. Old Park welcomes staff, workers, trainees, volunteers, pupils, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds, and creeds. The school provides for pupils of different abilities drawn from the area in which the School is situated. The term School Community includes staff governors, pupils, parents, visitors, and volunteers.

1.3. The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Through the school values of kindness, diversity and responsibility our children will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School Community. In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

1.3.1. disability

1.3.2. gender reassignment

1.3.3. pregnancy and maternity

1.3.4. race

1.3.5. religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)

1.3.6. sex

1.3.7. sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the School Community)

1.3.8. marital or civil partnership status; and

1.3.9. age

1.4. The above are called Protected Characteristics identified in The Equality Act 2010. Which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It consolidates previous anti-discrimination laws into a single legal framework. The School also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

2. Through the operation of this policy, we aim to:

2.1.1. communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities

2.1.2. promote equal treatment within the School for all members of the School Community

2.1.3. create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination

2.1.4. foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School

2.1.5. remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist

2.1.6. ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any person on any ground listed at paragraph 1.2

2.1.7. make it clear that, and ensure, that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable

2.1.8. take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the Reasonable Adjustments duty).

2.2. The School aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities and comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading, by example, through the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE at Old Park 'Wellbeing') programme, through the supportive School culture and through the School's policies.

2.3. The School is committed to promoting equality and has produced policies to assist promotion of the following aims:

2.3.1. to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

2.3.2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those without

2.3.3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3 Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all members of the current and prospective School Community.

4 Legislation and regulation

- the Equality Act 2010,
- the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE (Department for Education), March 2017),
- the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Children and Families Act 2014.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Equality Act 2010: explanatory notes (2010),
- the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, January 2015),
- Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, July 2018)
- non-statutory guidance Equality Act 2010 and schools: departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies, and local authorities (DfE, May 2014) and 4
- Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2014).

Forms of discrimination

4.1 Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

i Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as set out in paragraph 1.2 above. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" on the grounds of their race would be direct discrimination.

ii Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a pupil is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that pupil.

iii Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.

iv. Discrimination arising from disability: Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a pupil with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a school trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

5. Admissions

5.1 Admissions policy: The School's admissions policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this policy. Admission into Reception is led by Sandwell Local Authority.

6 Education and associated services

6.1 Equal access: The School will afford all pupils equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes, and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare, paragraph 5.2, and section 8, below.

6.2 Positive action: The School may afford pupils of a particular racial group, or pupils with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the pupils in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

6.3 Exclusions: The School will not discriminate against any pupil by excluding him or her from the School, or by subjecting him or her to any other detriment, on the grounds of his or her Protected Characteristics, subject to section 8 of this policy.

6.4 Teaching and School materials: Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example sex or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the

School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

6.5 Pupil interaction: All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

6.6 Bullying:

The School will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason. The School's anti-bullying policy contains more details about the School's anti-bullying practices. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying relating to race, religion, belief, or culture
- bullying related to SEN (Special Educational Needs), learning difficulties or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- bullying relating to sexual orientation
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying
- sexist or sexual bullying or bullying related to gender reassignment

7 School uniform

7.1 The School uniform policy is consistent with this policy. The same School uniform policy applies equally to all pupils, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the School will consider reasonable requests to alter the School uniform, for example for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.

7.2 Symbols of faith: Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the School's existing School uniform policy principles (in regard to, for example, the School colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the pupil or the pupil's parents to the headteacher, whose decision will be final, subject to the complaint's procedure.

7.3 Disabled pupils: Reasonable adjustments may be required to the School uniform for disabled pupils who require them. The pupil or his or her parents should refer the matter to the Headteacher to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the pupil.

8 Religious belief

8.1 Religion: The School's religious ethos, services and School timetable are set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the School respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith, subject always to their respecting the rights and freedoms of the School Community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

9 Disability and special educational needs

9.1 We are an inclusive School which welcomes members of the School Community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the School and we will not treat a member of the School Community less favourably on these grounds without justification. At present, our facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited. However, we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures, and premises are made accessible to everyone.

9.2 Definitions: Children have 'special educational needs' if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long-term adverse effect" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010). For further clarification please refer to the policies mentioned in the front sheet.

9.3 The School's policy on special educational needs includes details about the welfare and educational provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health, and Care Plans

9.4 Reasonable adjustments: The School has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of School life, for example: the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to School facilities, clubs and visits, School sports and School policies. Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete a test (In line with STA guidance)
- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment (in line with STA guidance)
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

9.5 The School is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations/new capital facilities, or a new library.

9.6 In making reasonable adjustments, the School is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. The School will carefully consider any proposals made by

parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aid and services. Informing the School:

9.7 Parents of pupils should notify the headteacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that the pupil (or prospective pupil) has a disability or if they (either parent), the pupil (or prospective pupil), or any close relations have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty.

9.8 Parents should provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the School with such information will enable the School to support the pupils as much as possible.

Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. The School will have due regard to any request made by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Access

9.9 The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

9.10 The School accessibility plan is included within the equality objectives and is kept under regular review

10 Pupils with English as an additional language

10.1 English as an Additional Language (EAL (English as an Additional Language)): Pupils with English as an Additional Language will receive additional learning support if necessary. The School will consult with the pupil and the parents as appropriate. Linguistic diversity is positively recognised.

10.2 Language and culture: The School will ensure that:

- home-School links are made to involve parents directly in the work of the School;
- interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible;
- links are established within the local community;
- staff work effectively with other local services;
- learning support for ethnic minority pupils is efficient and effective;
- provision is made for the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information; and
- Pupils' names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Pupils should be encouraged to accept and respect names from cultures other than their own.

11 Responsibilities

11.1 All members of the School Community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity at all times.

11.2 Overall responsibility: The Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's equal opportunities policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Trustees has delegated to the Headteacher day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance, and review.

11.3 Management: Those working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities in light of the public sector equality duty

11.4 Senior management:

The senior management team is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged pupils are in place. Arrangements include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns in exclusions and poor attendance;
- monitoring differences in attitudes to School, work, and other pupils;
- addressing harassment and bullying;
- evaluating performance among different groups;
- the impact of any additional support.

12 Monitoring and review

12.1 Monitoring: To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admissions, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in the School, the School monitors applicants' sex, race, disability and religion or belief as part of the [• Admissions] procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.

12.2 Review: The Headteacher is responsible for the ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data monitored under paragraph 12.1 above and under paragraph 13 below and will arrange for the taking of appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination where necessary.

12.3. The Headteacher is also responsible for reviewing whether the aims of this policy are carried out throughout all areas of the School and taking appropriate action where necessary. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to the Governors

13 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

13.1 Complaints: If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 1.2 above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's formal Complaints Procedure.

13.1.1 For a copy of the School's Complaints Procedure, please see the school website. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the Complaints Procedure. 1

3.2 Reports: If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint under paragraph 12.1 above, please contact the Headteacher.

13.3 Enforcement: We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

13.4 Record: All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded, and this record will be reviewed annually by the [the Headteacher or Business Manager].

14 Staff

14.1 The school is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing.

14.2 All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. A commitment to equal opportunities is included in the selection criteria for all posts.

15 Training

15.1 The annual declaration of interests contains a statement to confirm the most recent policy position is read and understood.