

OLDBURY ON SEVERN CHURCH OF ENGLAND VC PRIMARY SCHOOL
‘Love one another as I have loved you’ (John 15:12)
EQUALITY DUTY POLICY

Introduction

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. It makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Rationale

Equality of opportunity and valuing diversity is about providing equality and excellence for all, in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community: pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

To promote equality of opportunity, the school will:-

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have
- take steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- encourage people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities

To show that due regard is being paid to the importance of promoting equality of opportunity, we will include information about the steps taken in response to any analysis of the available data as part of readily available documents such as Head teacher reports to the governing body.

Protected Characteristics

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil, a prospective pupil or a pupil who has left the school, by treating them less favourably because of their protected characteristics:-

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief

- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

In carrying out its functions, Oldbury on Severn CEVC Primary School will therefore have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act,
- Promote equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Guidelines

We will give relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty:-

- when making a decision or taking an action and will assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics and
- by considering equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and keep them under review on a continuing basis.

The Public Sector Equality Duty will be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the analysis necessary to comply with the duty will be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind.

We will not delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else.

We will keep a written record of any equality consideration, to show that we have actively considered our equality duties and asked relevant questions, and to demonstrate that the 'due regard' duty is being fulfilled.

We will demonstrate that we are fostering good relations between people and groups of all kinds through our school's vision, values and aims and our curriculum themes which promote an understanding of a range of religions or cultures.

Aims

The specific aims of this policy are:-

- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote positive attitudes
- To eliminate discrimination
- To eliminate harassment
- To challenge prejudice
- To encourage participation
- To meet the needs of all pupils
- To monitor pupil achievement for all groups of children

Disability

Definition of disability

The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions e.g. multiple sclerosis and cancer are considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Reasonable adjustments and when they have to be made

The school may treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases is required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities. The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people.

From September 2012 schools and local authorities have a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments, where these are not being supplied through Special Educational Needs (SEN) statements or from other sources. We will therefore make these adjustments:-

- Where something we do places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then we will take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- When it would be reasonable to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to nondisabled pupils.

We are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of our Accessibility Plan.

We will try to ensure that disabled pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life and the reasonable adjustments duty will help support that. However, there will be times when adjustments cannot be made because to do so would have a detrimental effect on other pupils and would therefore not be reasonable.

Race

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. We will make sure that pupils of all races are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

Curriculum

The content of the school curriculum is excluded from the Act, so we will ensure that a wide range of issues, ideas and materials will be included in our teaching and learning, which contribute to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We will ensure that the way in which issues are taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination.

Acts of worship

Collective worship will be of a broadly Christian nature, although other religious festivals may also be celebrated.

Bullying

All forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.

Conclusion

The specific duties regulations require schools:

- to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- to prepare and publish equality objectives.

These will be updated annually and objectives published at least once every four years.

We will set up an equalities page on our website where all this information is present or links to it are available. Evidence of the steps being taken and progress made towards meeting its equality objectives will also be published.

Equality objectives

- to increase participation in enrichment activities by all groups within the school community
- to narrow the gap in performance of vulnerable groups;
- to raise attainment in Communication for those with limited pre-school experience;
- to extend or expertise in meeting the needs of complex SEN pupils in order that they may make the best progress possible.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:-

- The Equality Act 2010 Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEN Policy