



EQUALITY POLICY

2015

Date Confirmed by Governors: 6th July 2015

Date of Review: Summer 2017

Purpose

This Policy and our Equalities Action Plan will help ensure that we avoid discrimination and promote equality and good relations at Colman Junior School in order to improve attainment and progression for all pupils. Good education and skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of a successful life - we hold this ambition for all of our children.

The Policy and Action Plan integrate our statutory duties in relation to equalities and the promotion of community cohesion. The policy covers staff, pupils, parents and other users of school services. It sets out how we meet our public sector duties to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equalities Policy will show how we foster good relations not only within school amongst our diverse group of pupils, parents and staff but also in the wider community. The Accessibility Plan of the School lays out plans to increase access for disabled pupils in line with the planning duties in the Special Educational Needs and Disability regulations 2014. The Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy reflects our commitment to ensuring all pupils have equal access to education.

Summary

We strive to make Colman Junior School an excellent place to learn and grow for all pupils regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all
- Eliminating discrimination
- Promoting positive attitudes towards diversity
- Promoting mutual respect and tolerance
- Promoting a positive self image for all
- Encouraging participation by all in public life
- Providing a positive working environment for all children and staff
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum for children of all abilities
- Developing everyone's potential.
- Being proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.

- Taking steps to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognising and celebrating cultural differences, and understanding the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.
- Encouraging all staff and pupils to act positively against any form of discrimination
- Seeking the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and trying to involve them in policy review.

1. School Ethos

We strive to make the best possible provision for all, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.

Colman Junior is a school which places equality of opportunity and the provision of a caring, supportive environment for learning at its core.

We value the partnership which exists between school, parents and community. The school acknowledges the varying needs of different groups of pupils and promotes tolerance of difference and diversity.

'Difference and diversity' could apply to any or all of the following:

- Males and Females
- Race, ethnicity, national origin or status, Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- Pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language
- Pupils and their families with different religious faiths
- The age of Pupils' parents or carers
- Pupils with special educational needs
- Gifted or talented pupils
- Sexual orientation, either real or perceived, both of children and their parents or carers
- Children in public care ("looked after")
- Other children, such as sick children and those with medical needs, young carers and those children from families under stress
- Any pupils who are at risk of, or have been, disaffected or excluded
- In addition; people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence
- People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Down's Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included
- Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities
- Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included

- If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

'Inclusion' is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.

2. Our Duties

a. General Duty

Under the statutory duties all schools have a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

b. Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics referred to above relate to:

Age

Refers to a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages.

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he 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.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a union between a man and a woman (or, in some jurisdictions, two people of the same sex) as partners in a relationship. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 recognised the legal right for same sex couples to marry in England. Civil partnerships are able to be converted into marriages if couples choose to do so. If this is not the case then civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A male or a female.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

c. Specific Duty

In addition to the general duty, all schools have a responsibility to comply with the specific public sector duty to:

- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and
- set equality objectives, at least every four years

We will do this annually. The equality objectives will be based upon data gathered within the school which shows that action is needed on a specific equalities issue.

d. Community Cohesion

We also have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non religious and socioeconomic groups.

3. School Organisation

- a. The organisation and administration of the school will reflect and support inclusion and equality of opportunity for pupils, staff, parents and carers with due regard to current employment law, the Human Rights Act 1998, SEN and Disability Regulations 2014, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended in 1986, The Equality Act 2010 and its own S.E.N Information Report.
- b. Within the constraints of the agreed County intake limit for the school, children will not be discriminated against in any way when parents request admission for their child to the school. Every attempt will be made to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils so long as it is compatible with the efficient education of other children. (SEN and Disability Act 2001, Amendments 2005).
- c. Every effort will be made to communicate with all parents especially in terms of initial contact. Throughout the four years in school all parents will be given opportunities to visit to discuss their children's progress. The school regards this as a two-way process and welcomes contact from parents. They will also be invited to participate in school activities. Written communication will be clear and straightforward. When necessary, (and possible), translations will be provided.
- d. All cultures will be respected and valued. Positive images will be cultivated through knowledge of festivals from other religions, poetry, stories, art, music etc. within an appropriate context of the curriculum.
- e. Different dietary requirements, based on religious and moral belief as well as physical need, will be catered for as far as possible.
- f. Achievements of disabled pupils will include not only formal achievements and qualifications, but also other achievements such as improving attendance or achieving positions of responsibility. 'Value added' achievements of disabled pupils compared to their non-disabled peers will be assessed by such means as SATS results, out of school club participation and sporting achievements.

4. Classroom Practice

- a. The curriculum and classroom practice will endeavour to ensure equal access and involvement irrespective of ability, gender, race, creed, physical ability or social circumstances.

- b. Practice with regard to school visits demonstrates this commitment whereby no child shall be excluded from a school visit because of an inability or unwillingness to pay. This includes a disability. The school commits to inclusion of pupils and staff on educational visits except where risk assessments identify unacceptable risk to the individual or the group. In such circumstances, alternative provision will be explored to ensure the educational opportunities are made available to all.
- c. The same standards of behaviour, presentation and effort will be demanded from all pupils. We expect staff to use their professional judgement when dealing with children who have SEN or those who may require more sensitive handling. At any time if the class teacher is concerned they should approach the Headteacher for support.
- d. Full potential will be expected of all pupils, with particular actions taken to target under achievement in any group of children.
- e. Staff will endeavour to be aware of gender, or any other form of stereotyping, when commenting on or marking children's work.
- f. Staff will endeavour to give attention fairly to all children in classroom discussions.
- g. Staff will endeavour to move to, and interact with, all groups and individual children in the classroom on an equal basis.

5. Resources

- a. All teaching, learning and communication materials will reflect and support the school's commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all staff, pupils, parents, visitors and governors
- b. All efforts will be made to ensure that new books and materials are free of stereotyping and project positive and equal images.
- c. Displays will project similar positive and equal images.
- d. Pupils will have equal opportunity of access to school facilities, activities, use of playgrounds and school equipment through the four years in the school.
- e. Pupils will have equality of opportunity in being considered for inclusion in extracurricular and other out of school activities. This will be with the understanding that numbers taking part may be limited by accommodation and health and safety considerations (see also 4b). If it is necessary to limit numbers, a fair method of selection will take place.

- f. Information will be provided in alternative formats to those that require it.
- g. Educational links with local Special Schools will be utilised to enable the School to optimize its ability to provide equality of opportunity.
- h. All attempts will be made to encourage participation in the Governing Body and PTA to reflect the difference and diversity within our community.

6. Personal, Social and Health Education

- a. Classroom pastoral care and the P.S.H.E programme will satisfy the differing needs of all children.
- b. Children's awareness of equality issues will be raised through classroom discussion and by the choice of stories in class and themes in assemblies.
- c. The future development of the P.S.H.E. programme will address issues of equal opportunities appropriate to each year group.

7. Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

The School's Behaviour Policy and Anti- Bullying Policy both indicate that racist or sexist behaviour or language is completely unacceptable, and will be dealt with according to that Policy. Discrimination based on any protected characteristic will be equally dealt with.

The school aims to eliminate discrimination, and to promote equal opportunities and good relations in all areas of school life. These include aiming to provide equality of opportunity for pupils / staff in:

- Progress, attainment and assessment
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusion
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and learning
- Admission and attendance
- The curriculum
- Staff recruitment and professional development; and
- Partnerships with parents, carers and communities.

The School is committed to:

- Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and good relations
- Encouraging, supporting and helping all pupils and staff to reach their potential
- Working with parents and carers, and with the wider community, to tackle discrimination and to follow good practice
- Making sure the Equalities Policy and its procedures are followed.

The school has a firm policy against any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The following are possible examples:

- Direct taunts and insults
- Less direct comments such as negative comments about clothing, customs, religion, food, etc.
- Acts of aggression, particularly playground victimisation
- Refusal to allow children to play because of race, disability, etc.
- Parents' comments (or any comments contrary to the ethos of this policy) on the school premises.

Incidents of this and similar kind will not be overlooked and there will be a direct approach in dealing with them. Colman Junior School records and reports all racist incidents to the Local Authority.

It must also be recognised that children do not always understand the implications of their actions or words and that they may well be repeating what they have heard elsewhere. Nonetheless, these can escalate and are hurtful and the school recognises its responsibility to deal with incidents as they arise.

Children suffering from discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be supported. They must understand that it is all right to complain and that they will be taken seriously. Parents' complaints similarly will be listened to and investigated as a priority. When the matter arises in the classroom or playground, teachers will discuss the matter with the offending children, pointing out the hurt they have caused. It will be clear that such behaviour is not acceptable, under any circumstances, and all children involved will be suitably counselled. The Headteacher will be informed and will also talk with those involved.

The Headteacher will be informed directly of any racist incidents and of any parental complaints. In some circumstances this may lead to a child being excluded from school to allow further investigation and to indicate the level of seriousness of the complaint. The parents of the offenders will be involved at this stage.

8. Specific responsibilities

The governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with all legislation related to equalities including the Equalities Act 2010
- Making sure the Equalities Policy & its procedures are followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the Equalities Policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents and carers know about it
- Making sure the Equalities Policy and its procedures are followed
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy if necessary
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- Taking appropriate action and recording all cases of harassment, discrimination and victimisation
- Recording and monitoring of all incidents of bullying.