

SHARPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sharpness Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy



Approved by:	Miss H Buckingham, Headteacher Mrs Lisa Thompson, Chair of Governors	Date: 5th March 2024
Last reviewed:	March 2024	
Next review due by:	March 2026	

Policy Rationale

This policy statement outlines the school's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, and outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Sharpness Primary School to provide equal opportunities for all members of the school community. These include pupils, teaching staff, support staff, parents, governors, visitors to the school and students on placement.

Sharpness Primary School seeks to comply with the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Duty applies to the following 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

We have "due regard" to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations through tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

The school will set its Equality Objectives every four years (equality data is reviewed annually). Progress against these objectives will be reported annually to the Governing Body.

Definitions

Equality

Equality means making sure that everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect. It means challenging discrimination and removing barriers, so that everyone has opportunities to achieve their desired outcomes.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognizing the benefits of different values, abilities, and perspectives, and celebrating people's differences. This means promoting an environment that welcomes and values diverse backgrounds, thinking, skills and experience.

Inclusion

Inclusion is providing a space where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources, and where everyone feels valued and accepted. Everyone should be able to contribute and have a voice. This may mean making reasonable adjustments to facilitate participation.

The Equality Act – Protection from discrimination

The Act protects people in various settings, including the workplace and educational settings. People are specifically protected from:

Direct Discrimination

This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because they have, or are thought to have, a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Association

This is discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception Discrimination

Direct discrimination against an individual because others think that they possess a protected characteristic, even

though they do not.

Indirect Discrimination

This occurs if there is a condition, rule, policy or practice in the school which applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic. Under some circumstances this may be reasonable and lawful if it is necessary for the school to operate effectively – for example the employment of male and female PE teachers.

Harassment

Harassment is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment for that individual”.

This can be as direct as bullying someone for the colour of their skin or as broad as doing or saying something that unintentionally offends someone on the basis of gender.

All members of the school community are encouraged to report behaviour that they find offensive, even if it is not directed at them and even if they do not possess the particular protected characteristic themselves.

The school will also protect pupils and staff from harassment by people from outside the school. If this is reported, the school will take reasonable steps to prevent it happening again.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a pupil or employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act.

Prejudice

Prejudice can be conscious or unconscious and involves stereotypes, prejudgments, and beliefs (which are usually negative) about an individual, or group of people, based on a protected characteristic.

Our Approach

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life and are the responsibility of every member of the school community.

All members of the school community should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value and be given equal opportunity regardless of ethnicity, gender, social background, ability/disability, belief, age, marital status, nationality or sexual orientation.

At Sharpness Primary School equal opportunity means that everyone has the right to equal chances and each individual is respected for who they are.

We aim to create an ethos and atmosphere which demonstrates mutual respect between all members of the school community. We aim to welcome visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.

As a school, we seek to develop to the full the intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and cultural potential of each pupil. We aim to bring to each student a realisation of their role and value in the community, as well as their responsibilities to that community.

Sharpness Primary School is inclusive and everyone is of equal value and has equal opportunities. The school will promote the development of the individual without regard to gender, race, physical or intellectual capacity, disability, sexuality and health status.

We aim to create a learning environment which supports equal opportunities in the following ways:

- We seek to establish consistently high expectations of all students regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background.
- All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children’s achievements in this light.
- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students.
- Curriculum planning incorporates the principles of racial equality and actively promotes positive attitudes towards

diversity within our RE (Religious Education), PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) and RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) schemes of work, and through the teaching of our core values and wider curriculum.

- To prepare all pupils for life in a multi-racial society.
- Celebrate the diversity of culture within the school, community, wider society and internationally (e.g. cultural and diversity weeks).
- Encourage the use of positive action to overcome disadvantage and discrimination.
- Encourage communication and discussion about Equality issues.
- The adults in the school endeavour to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all students' learning needs including the more-able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.
- The school provides an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All pupils are actively involved in their own learning. A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.
- We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential.
- The provision of good quality resources and materials is a high priority. These resources should reflect positive images of all social groups and avoid discriminatory images or views.
- We recognise the importance of language and all members of the school community should use appropriate language which avoids offence to others.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Board

The Governing Board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and equitably.

The Governing Board:

- Seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school.
- Will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.
- Welcomes all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.
- Will ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Implement the school's Equality and Diversity Policy and is supported in doing so by the Governing Board.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equality and diversity opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.
- Treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

Class Teachers and Support Staff

Staff will:

- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.
- Select classroom material, paying due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist, sexist or prejudice in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.
- When designing schemes of work, use this policy to guide them, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Serious incidents will be recorded on *MyConcern* and the Headteacher informed.

Equality of Opportunity

The school will take positive action to advance equality of opportunity. Advancing equality of opportunity involves, in particular:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

We are bound by the legal requirements of the recent legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.

- Unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)
- Unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability, or disability, sexuality, gender.

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these in its Behaviour Policy.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment because of their Protected Characteristics, (perceived or otherwise), in particular but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer & training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- All other aspects of employment.

Training

Training will play an important role in assisting employees to implement the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and in developing employees' skills and potential.

The purpose of training is to:

- Inform employees of the purpose of the Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy
- Provide employees with the skills and knowledge necessary to implement the policy
- Develop the full potential of employees, particularly those previously disadvantaged by discrimination

- Encourage and enhance the skills of employees, particularly those from groups who have traditionally been under-represented in the work force.

Monitoring

The school is committed to equality of opportunity with regard to the appointment of staff and with regard to staff pay and professional development. A record is kept of appointments made and the profile of staff, including details of gender and ethnicity. This is reported to the Finance and Staffing committee on an annual basis.

We will record all incidents or complaints of discriminatory incidents, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and those which are perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person in conjunction with our school policy for dealing with such incidents.

Complaints Process

It is important that the Equal Opportunities Policy works in practice and is fully implemented. Where the policy is found not to be working and results in unfair treatment of employees or the public, then a complaint of unfair discrimination should be made to the Chair of Governors, following the procedure set out in the School's Complaints Policy. All complaints of unfair discrimination, including harassment, will be investigated fully.

Associated Policies and Other Relevant Documents

Accessibility
Anti-bullying
Behaviour
Equality Objectives
Recruitment (LA)
RSE Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection
SEN
SDP
Staff Code of Conduct

Policy reviewed March 2024