



The Westbrook Trust

Brompton-Westbrook Primary, Kings Bastion, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5DQ

Tel: 01634 844152

Email: office@bromptonwestbrook.medway.sch.uk

Equality Statement

Introduction

This Trust is an inclusive organisation and we are committed to developing each and every child and their family. The Trust ensures that its policies give everyone equal opportunities treating them according to what they can do rather than who they are. For this purpose, all policies carry an equality impact rating.

Schools in the Trust fully endorse the aims of the Equality Legislation (summarised below) and will actively seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all. The approach Trust schools will take to setting and reviewing these objectives is set out below.

The Law

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. The Act put in place a number of duties for public bodies, including schools, to ensure that they have due regard to certain 'protected' groups. The protected groups are age, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity.

The general duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In summary, all public bodies and schools must have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act makes it unlawful for schools 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

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

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, humiliating or offensive environment for that person". Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ('a protected act') in connection with the Equality Act.

In a school setting the general principle is that male and female, black and white, gay and straight pupils must be treated equally. A school may however be required to treat disabled pupils differently. Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities. This might include making reasonable adjustments or providing auxiliary aids and services.

Schools also have a legal requirement to prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objective which will help them to further the three aims of the Equality Duty. For schools in the Trust, these objectives will be published in September and reviewed annually to demonstrate how the school is meeting them and to identify any new objectives. They will be fully reviewed and updated at least every four years having first been approved by the local governing body.

Equality Objectives

Each school in the Trust is free to choose the equality objectives that best suit its individual circumstances and that contribute to the welfare of the pupils and the school community. The schools are also free to set as many objectives as they believe are appropriate to their size and circumstances.

- The objectives will be used as a tool to help improve the school experience of a range of different pupils.
- Schools will aim to produce objectives that address the most pressing issues facing the protected groups, which fit the school's needs and are achievable.
- The development of equality objectives will be aligned with the normal planning processes of the school, including self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.
- In setting its objectives, schools may find it helpful to think about:
 - the type of evidence that could be used to inform the objectives, from both internal and external sources
 - the type of equality issues that are raised by staff, pupils and parents/carers
 - where evidence indicates that equality performance is poor

- what objectives could be set to stretch the school to perform better on equality issues in key areas
- whether there is scope to benchmark equality information and objectives against other schools;
- whether to set short term, medium term or long term objectives in different areas;
- how progress against the objectives will be measured

Examples of Equality Objectives for Schools

Although not exhaustive, the following are examples of the areas that Trust schools might develop into equality objectives with the aim of e.g. removing or minimising disadvantages, taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic or encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

- to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular opportunities, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity;
- to reduce prejudice and increase understanding of equality through direct teaching across the curriculum;
- to narrow the gap between boys and girls in writing by the end of a key stage;
- to increase the membership of equality groups in out-of-school clubs and activities, and in this way to reduce or remove inequalities in attainment throughout the school;
- to narrow the gap between children eligible for pupil premium funding and those who are not, in mathematics at higher levels
- to narrow the gap in performance of disabled pupils;
- to increase understanding between religious groups;
- to reduce the number of homophobic incidents;
- to increase participation by black pupils in after school activities;
- to encourage girls to consider non-stereotyped career options;
- to anticipate the needs of incoming pupils from a new group, such as traveller children; or
- to reduce the incidence of prejudice-related bullying in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.

Publication of Information and Objectives

Equality information and objectives can be published as part of another document, such as the school improvement plan or can be placed on the school's website. There is no need to produce a separate document and it will be up to schools themselves to decide in what format they publish it. However, information should be in a place and in a format that is easy to access for both internal and external users.

The information will include:

- specific and measurable targets for each equality;
- the intended outcome and how this will be measured;
- what action will be taken;
- who will lead on each key priority; and
- how and who will coordinate, monitor, and report on progress made

It must be noted that the government has made it clear that the duties of the Act should not be overly burdensome on schools and schools will **not be** required to collect statistical data which

they do not already collect routinely. For some protected characteristics, statistical data about pupils is less likely to be available, and it may well not be considered appropriate to try to obtain it.

More general data about the issues associated with these particular protected characteristics, from which schools should be able to identify possible issues which may affect their own pupils, will be easily available however. For example, information from groups such as Stonewall or GIRES about the experience of gay or trans pupils in schools generally may help schools to understand how best to support their own pupils. Such information (or links to/extracts from it) may be included in a school's published material, alongside information about any initiatives taken, or policies developed, to promote equality for particular groups

Although schools are free to publish their equality information in any way they wish, the following provides advice on how this might be done.

1. Introduction stating the school's commitment to equalities and community cohesion which may include information from this document
2. Section giving general information about the pupil population and identifying main equality challenges
3. Description of twinning or networking arrangements with other schools which enable pupils to meet and exchange experiences with children from different backgrounds
4. Examples of assemblies and curriculum elements dealing with relevant issues
5. Information about who the school consulted and worked with and how equality issues were considered when making decisions
6. The equality objectives - set out as advised in this document
7. Annual review of objectives

Other Equality Evidence

Schools in the Trust will have a range of other evidence to demonstrate how they comply with The Act, this includes the following:

- a range of policies such as for behaviour, anti-bullying policy, recruitment and pay in which the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct is expressly noted.
- Minutes of meetings (staff or governors) where they are reminded of their responsibilities under the Act
- evidence of staff training on the Equality Act
- monitoring for equality issues
- aspects of the curriculum which promote tolerance and friendship, or which share understanding of a range of religions or cultures
- involvement with the local communities
- initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school itself

Schools may also wish to engage with and consult people affected by their decisions such as parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community and with people who have special

knowledge which can inform the school's approach. These groups might include disability equality groups, special schools and other relevant special interest organisations.

Approach to Setting and Meeting Objectives

- Preparation - Select a project group and include at least one governor
- Equality Information- Gather the information you already hold
- Engagement - Summarise how you currently engage with protected groups
- Equalities Analysis - Use evidence gathered and prepare a brief analysis of effectiveness in showing due regard for each of the three needs for each of the protected groups
- Equality Objectives - Use evidence gathered and decide on equality objectives
- Publish - Publish the Equalities information gathered and identified objectives

Appendices

Appendix (i) Equality Scheme Impact Assessment

An initial impact assessment under the school's Single Equality Scheme has been carried out for this policy	
A	Positive impact is explicitly intended and very likely
B	An adverse impact is unlikely, and on the contrary the policy has the clear potential to have a positive impact by reducing and removing barriers and inequalities that currently exist
C	An adverse impact is unlikely. On the contrary there is potential to reduce barriers and inequalities that currently exist. There is insufficient evidence, however, for this assessment to be made with as much confidence as is desirable
D	Adverse impact is unlikely, but positive impact is also unlikely.
E	Adverse impact is probable or certain, since certain groups will be disadvantaged, either proportionately or absolutely, or both. Remedial action is therefore necessary
F	Adverse impact is probable or certain for certain groups but the policy as a whole can nevertheless be justified. PLEASE NOTE: Selecting this assessments will necessitate the need for legal advice

Version	1.0
Author	J Heyes
Approval Date	00.05.17
Review Date	May 2021