



## BUCKFASTLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Equal Opportunities Policy



REVIEW DATE: March 2017 (Sooner if legislation dictates)

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

#### **Aims**

Equality of opportunity at Buckfastleigh Primary School 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.

We aim to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- Creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- Building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so they can use these qualities to achieve their full potential and become rounded citizens of the wider community;
- Have consistent expectations of the pupils and their learning;
- Removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- Ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our curriculum and lesson planning;
- Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality through our curriculum;
- Making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and discriminatory behaviour;
- Ensuring class and school resources reflect society as a whole;
- Has clear procedures for dealing with discriminatory incidents and that these are understood by all; and
- Ensure all pupils develop mutual respect through the school ethos, teachings and adult example.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all of its community, taking account of the nine protected characteristics; race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

Our Schools Commitment to Equality for all is by:

- Ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;
- Respecting and valuing differences between people;

- Preparing pupils for life in a diverse society;
- Acknowledging the existence of discrimination and taking steps to prevent it;
- Making the school a place where everyone, irrespective of a protected characteristic, feels welcomed and valued;
- Promoting good relations between groups within the school and the wider community;
- Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- Opposing all forms of discrimination and harassment;
- Being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

## **Our School Equality Ethos**

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all groups.

The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different groups subject to health and safety regulations.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular diversity and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant Academy policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff will go on courses to train them to deal effectively with bullying, discriminatory incidents, harassment and prejudice.

## **2016-2017 Equality Objectives**

Each year the school will set specific equality targets to improve the provision set out within this policy.

School equality objectives for 2016-2017 are:

### **Equality objective 1:**

***To increase the number of children achieving Age Related Expectations in English and Maths across the school.***

#### Progress with objective 1:

Pupils identified and targeted. Performance Management targets for teachers to raise attainment for individual pupils. Staff have closer links to planning and assessment to ensure all staff are aware of pupil's needs.

#### **Equality objective 2:**

***All groups of pupils regularly attend school in line with national expectation.***

#### Progress with objective 2:

Pupils and parents are made aware of the importance of attendance. Parents are reminded about attendance and punctuality through newsletters and termly attendance letters. Good attendance is emphasised by rewarding individuals achieving excellent attendance termly and at the end of the school year.

Individual attendance concerns (less than 90%) are raised with parents initially by a Persistent Absence Letter, then through meetings with the class teacher or Headteacher. The Educational Welfare Officer will become involved where attendance rates continue to be of concern.

## **Leadership & Management**

School policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.

The Governing Body and the school leadership set a clear ethos that reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community. The school promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity. The school leadership will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination. Parents can request to see policies and have their views taken note of.

## **Staffing: Recruitment & Professional Development**

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures that are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties.

All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.

Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions

All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices

Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

## **Curriculum**

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils. The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated where appropriate to ensure the inclusion of:

- Boys and girls;
- Pupils learning English as an additional language; pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- Pupils who are high attaining; pupils with special educational needs;
- Pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- Pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. Subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued. All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum. Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs. Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals. Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender, SEND and social background. Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities. Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

## **Assessment, Achievement and Progress**

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is as free of gender, cultural and social bias as possible, and that assessment methods are valid. The school monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, EAL, SEND and those entitled to pupil premium and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on progress. All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment that summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning. Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

## **Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions**

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that having a protected characteristic may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the school's behaviour policy.

Pupils, staff, parents and governors are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour that is damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

## **Admissions and Attendance**

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admission forms.

The school and families are aware of rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel.

Provision would be made for leave of absences for religious observance that includes staff as well as pupils.

## **Partnership with Parents and the Community**

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The role of Local Governors**

The Local Governing Body has a commitment to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The Local Governing Body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. They check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving. This is achieved by monitoring: admissions, attainment, exclusions, parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

The Local Governing Body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 (see section 1.2 above) are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at the school. The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever the protected characteristic the applicant may have.

The Governing Body ensures that no pupil is discriminated against whilst in the school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a pupil's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the pupil's cultural traditions.

### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and they are supported by the Local Governing Body in so doing.

It is the Headteacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.

The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.

The Headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; assemblies regularly cover 'respect for other people', the 'Buckfastleigh Way' is displayed around the school.

The Headteacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

The Local Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation. The Local Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

### **The role of the Class Teacher**

Class teachers recognise their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. They do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

Class teachers seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in their choice of topics to study, and in how they approach sensitive issues.

All the teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Any incidents are recorded and the Headteacher is immediately informed.

## **Monitoring & Review**

It is the responsibility of our Local Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The Local Governors will therefore:

- Monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school.
- Monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against.
- Require the Headteacher to report to Governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy; take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity.
- Monitor the school's behaviour policy and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body every two years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.