

Equality Policy



Oxlow Bridge School

Approved by:
Reviewed and evaluated:
Ratified by Governors:
Next review date:

General Statement

Oxlow Bridge School are dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly and with respect and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination and victimisation are not tolerated and we work hard to instill in our pupils a strong understanding of rights and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. Oxlow Bridge School's main priorities are to provide the best education and care that we can, and establish co-operative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

Through the creation of this equalities plan we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within a school and how we can best deal with these.

The Equality Duties

This plan sets out how the school will satisfy its duties around the discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behavior prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic.

Oxlow Bridge School aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. The plan is written by senior leaders and ratified by the Board of Governors, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the SEND policy, as well as the Admissions and the Behaviour policies. This plan will be part any induction process within the school

Copies of all the policies named are available through the school website, paper copies can be requested through the school office.

Key Groups at Risk

Whilst Oxlow Bridge School recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- Race or ethnicity
- Age
- Disability
- Sex (gender), including transgender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity/paternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The above are known 'Protected Characteristics', here after referred to as the characteristics

Roles and Responsibilities

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole school responsibility and requires all member of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and

barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing body will:

- Create and approve this document with the help of relevant stakeholders and ensure that it is adopted correctly throughout the school.
- Review and monitor the school Equality Plan Objectives
- Ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality Objectives
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the equalities' plan annually and make any amendments to improve on the plan when and where necessary
- Nominate a governor to oversee the implementation of the equalities Plan, monitor Equalities outcomes, and regularly report back to the rest of the Governing Body.
- Ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child
- Report to parents, carers and the wider community on the progress of the school's equality plan, the school Prospectus and the school website.

The CEO, Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher, with the support of the rest of the Senior leadership team, will:

- Promote the Equalities plan both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and adhere of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and the delivery of equality in school
- Ensure that the Equality Plan is made available to the Local Governing Body
- Report back to the Local Governing Body on how the plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made as well as feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- Tackle bias and stereotyping
- Take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation

Staff

School staff within the school will:

- Ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this plan, their responsibilities within it and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- Tackle Bias and stereotyping
- Work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies
- Show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- Engage with the school with eliminating any discrimination and act as good examples to pupils
- Promote a positive working environment, equal opportunities and foster good relationships
- Report back to their line manger immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary

Pupils

Pupils at School will:

- Engage with the school with eliminating any discrimination
- Promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both within school and off the school site
- Report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discriminations, victimisation that they know to have occurred
- Work to promote the strategies outlined in the school's Behaviour policy

Parents, Carers and Visitors

Parents, carers and visitors to school are expected to:

- Familiarise themselves with the school's Single Equality Plan and support the scheme by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- Attend any relevant meetings/awareness raising sessions that they are invited to relating to the school's Equality Plan
- Work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- Respect and follow our Equality Plan when visiting the school

PROMOTING EQUALITY AND SOCIAL AWARENESS IN THE TRUST AND IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Community Cohesion

Oxlow Bridge expects all of its staff and pupils to act respectfully towards members of the wider communities that school is part of.

Inclusion

Promoting and practicing Inclusion in school lessons, around the school sites, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds.

Pupil Voice

A total communication approach will support the student voice. We will encourage our pupils to have confidence in sharing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in social interactions and interact with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between pupils from different year groups, pupils and staff as well as the wider community.

Recruitment

Oxlow Bridge is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment are selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in regard of these characteristics. Oxlow Bridge acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in the plan is the foundation for all its activities. Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel, it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that the equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

Staff

Equal Opportunities for Staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- Staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our communities where possible.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Staff Discipline and Suspension

The school is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and anyone not adhering to these values is held to account through our respective Adult Code of Conduct Policy.

The education and wellbeing of our pupils is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our pupils will be disciplined. The staff appraisal policy provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that the staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will have great faith in its employees, and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school positive behaviour policy takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups, and will take action to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Please refer to our Attendance and Behaviour policies.

Monitoring and review

The single equality plan will be reviewed annually by the Governing body unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving member of the school community or new legislation).

The school's governing body will review how effective it is in reducing/eliminating discrimination, promoting equality and participation and fostering good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. They will also review evidence that is being put into practice in school by staff and pupils, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

Every term, the Governing Body will review Monitoring Reports provided by the Headteacher. These will include data and information on:

- Recruitment and retention.
- Key initiatives
- Progress against targets relating to equality and future plans
- School population.

Outcomes

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Where robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment will be carried out and an action plan put in place to aid these outcomes.

Action plans will outline:

- Objectives and specific actions to be taken.
- Expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- Clear timetables
- Who has lead responsibility
- Resource implications specified dates for review.

Equality Impact Assessments

Impact assessments are carried out as part of the review of all school policies and assess whether school policies or plans are having a negative or adverse, or positive impact on groups of individuals within the school community.

Appendix 1

Definitions of terms used throughout the equality plan

- **Biological** – *Biological sex is the gender assigned at birth, depending on the appearance of the infant*
- **Cohesion** – *People from different backgrounds getting on well together (good community relations). There is a shared vision and sense of purpose or belonging. Diversity is valued. Relationships are strong, supportive and sustainable. Cohesion is an outcome of equality and Inclusion.*
- **Community** – From the school's perspective, the term 'community' has a number of meanings:
 - The school community – The students we serve, their families and the school staff.
 - The community within which the school is located – In its geographical community, and the people who live and /or work in that area.
 - The community of Britain – All schools by definition are part of this.
 - The global community – Formed by European and international links.
- **Disability** – In the UK a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- **Diversity** – Recognising that we are all different. Diversity is an outcome of equality and inclusion.
- **Equality** – This is more clearly defined as equality of opportunity and outcome, rather than equality of treatment. This means treating people fairly and according to their needs as some people may need to be treated differently in order to achieve an equal outcome.
- **Equality Impact Assessment** – Equality Impact Assessments are a good measure to ensure the embedding impact of equalities and diversity. Impact assessments should be carried out covering all protected characteristics and they should identify both good practice as well as areas where your performance in ensuring diversity could be improved.
- **Gender** – A person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people it refers to either men or women or to boys or girls.
- **Gender Identity** – Gender identity is the gender that a person 'identifies' with, or feels themselves to be.
- **Gender reassignment** – A person may express their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical gender that they were born with. Gender Reassignment may also be known as Gender Dysphoria.
- **Inclusive** – Making sure everyone can participate, whatever their background or circumstances
- **Pregnancy and Maternity** – This is the state that any female person of any age are in if they are or have been pregnant, given birth within the last 26 weeks, or are breast feeding a baby who is aged 26 weeks or younger.
- **Race** – The definition of 'Race' is outlined in the Equality Act 2010 as one of the protected characteristics which refer to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
- **Religion or Belief** – The term 'religion or belief' refers to a religious and/or philosophical belief, including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). A religion must be identifiable and have a clear structure or belief system. A

belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their lives or perceives the world (e.g. Humanism).

- **Sexual Orientation** – A person's sexual orientation towards (1) persons of the same sex. (2) Persons of the opposite sex (3) persons of either sex.