



Valence Primary School Equalities Policy

December 2016

Context

The Equality Act (2010) requires schools to have a Single Equality Scheme and means that schools cannot lawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation. The Act also ensures that protection is extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment.

The following policy meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Equality and the Law

The Equality Act (2010) has replaced all previous existing equality regulations, including those relating to race, disability and gender. The Equality Act (2010) is a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. Protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010) include:

- Sex
- Race,
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

The Equality Act (2010) also makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:

- Admissions
- The way it provides education for pupils
- The way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
- Excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any detriment

The equalities plan at the end of this equalities policy outlines the actions we will take to meet the duties in the Equality Act in respect of the above protected characteristics.

Equalities Mission Statement

Valence Primary School are committed to ensure equality of opportunity and support for all pupils, parents, carers and staff irrespective of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment and socio-economic background. We aim to provide a fully inclusive school in which every person feels proud of their identity and able to participate fully within the school community. We believe that a diverse school community is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. These statements are enshrined in our school motto,

‘Pride, Respect, **Achievement**, Independence, **Success**, Enjoyment - **PRAISE**’.

Purpose

- To enable all pupils/staff to maximise their potential and develop a high level of self-esteem.
- To promote and develop positive attitudes and respect for others regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, special need or background.
- To develop an awareness of different ways of life, beliefs, opinions and ideas in our society.
- To counter prejudice and avoid stereotyping.

Implementing the Equality Mission Statement

Providing High Quality Teaching and Learning

At Valence Primary School our curriculum is carefully planned to ensure coverage of a variety of topics referring to different countries and cultures. We celebrate diversity and believe that an understanding of other people’s faith, lifestyle or heritage encourages tolerance and we work hard to promote this acceptance in the everyday life of the school.

We aim to ensure that every pupil makes good progress and achieves well by:

- Using fully inclusive teaching and learning approaches to engage all our pupils. Teaching styles should enable the promotion of positive attitudes, a sense of personal worth and foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- Monitoring achievement data by ethnicity, gender, disadvantage and disability and intervening decisively when required.
- Rigorous analysis of pupils’ progress to determine and inform the strategies we will use to support groups of pupils and individuals.
- Setting challenging targets for all pupils.
- Using teaching resources which avoid stereotyping and reflect the diversity of the school and local community in terms of race, gender and disability.
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge all discriminatory behaviour and prejudices.

- Providing pupils with opportunities to celebrate their own and others cultures.
- Seeking the positive involvement of all parents / carers in their child's education.
- Encouraging discussion of equality issues which reflect social stereotypes, expectations and their impact upon learning. As a school we work to promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the educational opportunities we provide.
- Celebrating the cultural diversity of our community and showing respect for all minority groups within our school.
- Challenging stereotyping and prejudice whenever and wherever it occurs.
- Ensuring that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and we provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

The Central Role of All School Staff

School staff will implement the school's Equality Policy by ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. Pupils will also be expected to treat adults and each other with the same fairness, equality and respect.

We aim to identify, as early as possible, any adaptations pupils may require in order to have truly equal access to the full curriculum at Valence Primary School.

Acts of harassment and victimisation are unacceptable and will not be tolerated within the school community. Staff will actively identify and challenge all forms of prejudice, stereotyping, victimisation and harassment.

All school staff will deal appropriately with any incidents of prejudice, harassment or victimisation. Serious incidents of prejudiced behaviour, harassment or victimisation will be recorded and reported to the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher, SLT and Governing Body are committed to Equal Opportunities and they constantly endeavour to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality in all situations.

The Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of the school's Equality Policy and will ensure that all members of staff are aware of the Equality Policy and that these guidelines are applied fairly in all situations.

The Head Teacher is responsible for promoting equality of opportunity within the curriculum and wider school community and will treat all incidents of prejudice, stereotyping, victimisation and harassment with due seriousness.

The Role of School Governors

The school governing body will set out its commitment to equal opportunities by:

- Ensuring that the School Equalities Policy is consulted upon, published and regularly reviewed.

- Welcoming all applications to join the school from potential pupils or members of staff, regardless of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment and socio-economic background.
- Ensuring that no pupil or member of staff is discriminated against, whilst in school on account of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to all people with disabilities, and by striving to make all school communications and activities as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that there is no unlawful behaviour in respect of equality including discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Ensuring that all reasonable adjustments are made as necessary for pupils, staff and parents who have a disability in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Development of the Equalities Policy

It is a requirement that the development of the school Equalities Policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using utilising:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaires, parents' evenings and parent-school meetings.
- Input from staff through meetings and training.
- Feedback from the school council and PSHE lessons.
- Issues raised during annual reviews or reviews of progress on individual education plans and mentoring and support sessions;
- Feedback from Governing Body meetings.

Review of progress and impact

Our School Equality Policy has been agreed by our Governing Body. In line with legislative requirements, we will review annually.

Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Single Equality Scheme and we will:

- Publish our policy on the school website.
- Raise awareness through assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- Make paper copies available for all interested parties.

Using the information to prepare the Action Plan and assess the impact.

The school will use the information gathered to prepare the Inclusion Action Plan and to review annually the effectiveness of the actions taken. Where necessary new action points will be included.

Other policies that link;

Inclusion, Teaching and Learning, Child Protection and Safeguarding, EAL and Behaviour.

APPENDIX 1

What do we understand by disability?

Valence Primary School recognises that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in the education system and in society as a whole.

'Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' (DDA 1995 Part 1, Para. 1.1)

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with special educational needs be included as disabled for the purposes of the Act. Behavioural difficulties arising from physical or mental impairments or from mental illness are also included.

In our school, people with disabilities include those with hearing or visual impairment, mental health issues, physical and learning disabilities. Medical conditions are also recognised.

This Disability Equality Scheme set out the ways in which Valence Primary School will meet its general and specific duties. Valence Primary School believes that:

- 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.

How we will meet the General Duty and Specific Duty.

By challenging any negative attitudes to disability, we will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act 2010
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Additional Provision and Reasonable Adjustments

Valence Primary School has restructured educational provision to optimise use of staff, accommodation and resources in order to meet the needs of all learners. The following list gives examples but is in no means exhaustive and the provision is constantly evolving.

- Provision of Nursery Assessment Base
- Use of workstations/schedules for specific pupils
- Establishment of teaching spaces for children requiring Speech and Language Therapy, staffed by trained support staff
- Additionally resourced classrooms on both sites and for each Key Stage
- Ramps and building modifications to support ease of access
- Availability of additional ICT equipment
- Close links to external services

- Involvement in borough initiatives such as the Disability Games
- Additional support base for pupils with emotional, behavioural, social difficulties or mental illness
- Parent Support Advisors – one on each site
- Speechlink
- Specialist resources e.g. Black Sheep (Speech and Language) & Numicon (Maths).
- A specialist teacher for Dyslexia
- A specialist counsellor

Gathering information from disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and people from the wider community using the school.

The school will seek to improve how we gather information from people with a disability by consulting with parents and pupils to encourage disability disclosure and reduce the number of 'unknown' disability status.

To comply with the DDA requirements will consider in particular:

- The educational opportunities and achievements of pupils.
- The recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.

Gathering information will be an ongoing process. We will collect data about disability over time and analyse our policies and procedures in the light of our findings.

Information will be analysed to show how much progress has been made in relation to disability equality. Educational achievements and wider opportunities for pupils with disabilities will be monitored. Further opportunities to promote equality will be included in subsequent Action Plans.

APPENDIX 2

Anti-Racism/Anti-Sexism

We believe that it is the right of all pupils to receive the best education that Valence Primary School can provide. We do not tolerate any forms of racism, sexism or prejudiced behaviour. We challenge any incident of racism, sexism or prejudice and should a racist or sexist incident occur we follow school and LA procedures, immediately informing the Head Teacher (see Behaviour Policy). Racist incidents are reported to the Local Education Authority.

We understand that stereotyping and prejudice are caused by ignorance and poor self-image on the part of the perpetrator. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all. P.S.H.E. activities are also used to challenge discriminatory attitudes and beliefs.