

Elmstead Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy review co-ordinated by C.A. Middleditch
(Summer Term, 2011)

Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to promote race equality and cultural diversity within the **community** of Elmstead Primary School – with the emphasis on a community approach. It is important that we:

“...encourage children and adults to think about the community they live in, explore their own sense of identity and consider how a sense of community and belonging can be promoted.”

(Celebrating Cultural Diversity in the United Kingdom. NASUWT. 2009).

Diversity welcomes difference. By understating, respecting and using these differences we can maximise our impact through meeting individual needs and staying in touch with the changing societies in which we operate.

Children, Parents and Staff need to recognise and fulfil their personal role in making Elmstead Primary School a genuinely inviting and inclusive school.

This policy also considers the requirements of the Equality Act, 2010, with the main elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- foster good relations across all characteristics – between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty to have ‘due regard’ to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made, or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

This policy, alongside – for example, policies for behaviour, child protection and quality of teaching and learning – focus on our school’s effectiveness in increasing our ability to eliminate discrimination, reduce bullying and so on. Feedback from pupils and parents certainly plays a key part here. For example, the SEND Focus Group (previously the AfA Focus Group) have on their agenda ‘equality of opportunity’ as a fundamental principle.

Elmstead Primary School has a commitment to diversity, which is about:

- recognising and valuing difference;
- recognising and seeking to redress inequality and disadvantage;
- treating all in a fair, open and honest manner;
- recognising the right of all children, parents and staff to be treated with dignity and respect.

Elmstead Primary School is committed to:

- equality of opportunity;
- tackling discrimination and disadvantage;
- tackling harassment and intimidation.

Areas where discrimination could take place:

- gender;
- race (including Colour, Nationality, Ethnic origin & National origin);
- disability;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief;
- age;
- marital/civil partnership status;
- responsibility for dependents;
- trade union or political activities;
- criminal record (where the offence is not covered by other legislation relating to child protection);
- place of residence;
- health status;
- any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

As a school we work to employ strategies to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school. We recognise that a child's self perception can be influenced by his/her environment, so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any bias or stereotyping and promote equality of opportunity.

Gender:

- We are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer group and the media.
- Teaching and other groupings, queuing, classroom seating and playground areas are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender: for example, age, ability, friendship.
- Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.
- Any differences involving gender, which arise inside or outside the classroom, are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.
- We will ensure that no staff member is discriminated against because of his or her gender.

Race or cultural background:

Under the amended 'Race Relations Act' (2001) it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their race. Through implementation of the Race Equality Policy we will ensure that children, parents and staff from different ethnic groups, cultures, religions and background are provided equality of opportunity and are not discriminated against either openly or covertly.

Through our teaching we take positive steps to promote mutual understanding and respect for people from different backgrounds.

Age:

We make efforts to ensure that children of different ages are provided with appropriate activities and that children are not excluded from activities solely on the grounds of their age. We will ensure that all staff are given equal opportunities within the school regardless of age.

Ability:

We want all our children to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes and practices do not prevent any child from reaching their potential, whatever their ability.

Disability:

“Anyone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect upon his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is stated to be disabled.” (Quote from Disability Rights Commission). Disability is not about physical impairment only; it includes dyslexia, epilepsy, dyspraxia, diabetes, autistic spectrum disorders, ADHD, sensory impairment and cancer.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act, 2001, placed duties on all schools to avoid discrimination against disabled children. It also made it unlawful to be discriminated against because of a disability in areas of employment or access to goods, facilities and services.

We will endeavour to provide appropriate access both physically and through the curriculum, for all children with disabilities with appropriate support when required, from Essex Local Authority and outside agencies. Staff members with disabilities will be afforded the same support. We have a Disability Equality Scheme in place to meet the legal requirements of disability equality duties.

Equal opportunities for all children:

We will:

- ensure that all children have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum, with support where needed. This includes both the programmes of study and attainment targets for the EYFS, KS1 and KS2 Curriculum and outside areas such as extra-curricular activities;
- take account of pupils’ cultural backgrounds, language needs and different learning styles in learning and teaching;

- encourage all children to participate equally in the full range of activities, both inside and outside the classroom, and to have equal aspirations for future employment;
- make efforts to ensure that children in different localities, rural or urban have access to the same opportunities;
- ensure all learning materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and overt or covert discrimination;
- ensure teacher time, specialist support, attention and all resources are distributed equitably between all children;
- encourage all children to work and play freely with each other;
- ensure discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for all children;
- encourage all children and staff to value each other and build up and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community, based on mutual respect for each other;
- ensure that no pupil is excluded from activities due to their socio-economic status.

Parents:

We will ensure that each parent/carer is treated in a manner which ensures that they have full and equal access to support, information and resources. Where possible we will make the school accessible to parents with physical disabilities.

Staffing:

We will ensure that in appointing staff we endorse the statements set out in this policy and will actively avoid discrimination in all areas.

All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility. All staff are equally entitled to request flexible working arrangements, subject to approval by Governors. We have adopted the Local Authority Recruitment and Selection Guidelines, which includes the requirements to interview all applicants with disabilities who meet the essential criteria and to make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

Monitoring and review:

- Practices and approaches involving equality and diversity will regularly be reviewed by all members of staff when developing policy and strategy throughout the school.
- Practices and procedures will also be amended in light of any changes to legislation.
- We will monitor pupil attainment/achievement and progress to ensure that we have equally high expectations of all pupils and no pupil is underachieving because of any form of discrimination.
- The Head Teacher will be responsible for the overall monitoring and reporting of issues relating to Equality and Diversity.

Relevant Legislation:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & 2005
- Disability Equality Duty (pack in school)
- Gender Equality Duty (www.eoc.org.uk)
- Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice April 2007
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 - Chapter 34 and Notes to Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 (SI2001/3458)
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 (SI2003/1626)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 Chapter 10
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, commencement No. 5
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act 2010