



Equality Statement



Policy dated: April 2015
Policy updated: Jan 2018
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Equality Policy & Objectives

1. Guiding Principles

The governors recognise their responsibilities and legal obligations under Equality legislation and are fully committed to ensuring equality at Akaal Primary School. In fulfilling our legal obligations, we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value whatever their:

- ability or disability
- ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- gender or gender identity
- religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- sexual orientation
- age

The legislation refers to these as *protected characteristics*. Schools are exempt from applying age equality principles.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but will be sensitive to differences of life-experience, outlook and background. We will make reasonable adjustments to help people overcome any barriers or disadvantage they may face, in relation to protected characteristics.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees (for example in recruitment, promotion and continuing professional development) regardless of protected characteristics and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist for people with protected characteristics.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We ensure that the views of those with protected characteristics are taken into account.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of those with protected characteristics:

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to groups with protected characteristics.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives in relation to equality issues based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 6).

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

Accordingly, every three years, we draw up an action plan (within the School Improvement Plan and using information from our monitoring programme) setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify will take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them. (Based on information from Insted Consultancy - *Equalities in Education* – June 2011)

Akaal Primary School Equality Objectives 2018-21

Having reviewed current data and feedback, governors have agreed to work towards the following Equality Objectives over the next three years:

- To reduce prejudice and increase understanding of equality through teaching across the curriculum
- To narrow the gap between children with EAL and their peers
- To ensure the new building complies fully with equalities legislation and is accessible to all
- To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experiences in school

2. Our School Context

Akaal Primary School is newly formed Sikh Faith based Free School which opened in Sept 2015. It has 100 pupils and is set to grow over the coming years and move into a new building in Sept 2018. It is situated in an area of Derby with high social disadvantage and has significantly high number of children from minority ethnic backgrounds and with English as an additional language.

The school is relatively free of harassment incidents and the number reported in school each year is very small. There were only no reported harassment incidents in 2016/17.

The progress of our ethnic minority children is in line with national averages and is often good. Their attainment varies between cohorts. No group achieves significantly below the national average and many individuals achieve well above. Our boys and girls both achieve above their peers nationally and the gender attainment gap is not significant.

Our review of attainment and progress of our SEND children also shows satisfactory or good progress.

The majority of the staff team are WB and there are two male members of staff (all teachers). There is one Indian heritage colleague working in the office, 3 Indian heritage and 1 Polish member of support staff and 3 on the supervisory team.

In order to bring out the best in all our children, we recognise that we need to monitor the attainment and progress of groups of children who may in the past have been disadvantaged. We are committed to implementing this policy actively with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children. It will be implemented within the day to day practices of the school and links clearly to our policies on behaviour, anti-bullying and a range of staffing policies.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that there is a general duty placed on schools by the Equalities Act 2010. This policy aims to help us meet the duty to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

4. Teaching and Learning

The principles of equality and diversity are embedded, as far as is possible, in all areas of the curriculum and particularly in PHSCE and RE. Pupils are given opportunities to explore:

- the positive and enriching value of good relationships
- diversity in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability etc.
- the implications of prejudice and discrimination.

Each subject area is kept under review and we are committed to ensuring resource materials reflect both the diversity of the school, our local community and wider society as a whole.

Data on the attainment and progress of all children is collected and analysed including that of specific groups of pupils, particularly those with a recognised characteristic. This data and analysis is used to inform planning and provision to support individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils with additional needs, such as EAL, SEN etc, may require specific assessments to better understand their needs (eg early language acquisition assessments). We also recognise the importance of scrutinising assessment materials for cultural bias.

5. Ethos and Organisation

Equality and diversity principles underpin all our day to day practices and are embedded in all our policies. Examples of procedures and adjustments are given below:

- **Admissions, induction and attendance**

Admissions are managed by the Trustees, with the Local Authority administrating the scheme. Principles of equality are built in to the procedures. For example, the criteria for admission includes special consideration *for children with particular medical needs, mobility support needs, special educational needs or social circumstances*.

An **induction programme** is offered to all children and parents. In addition, pupils families are invited to meeting with our BME Coordinator to discuss special dietary, dress or language issues and any supplementary schooling being undertaken or planned. If necessary, a translator will be brought in to assist the meeting. Beginner bilinguals are given additional in-school support. Similarly, our SENCo meets with all parents whose child has life-long or complex needs to ensure the school understands how best to provide support for their learning.

Attendance is rigorously monitored and reported annually to governors to respond to any emerging trends related to BME or SEND. Individual circumstances are taken into account where attendance and/or punctuality are causing concern including the impact of a child's or parent's disability.

- **Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement**

Attainment and progress are rigorously monitored with particular reference to the achievement of different groups including gender, BME and SEND.

- **Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being**

The school listens carefully to the needs of our children, particularly BME children and those with SEND or EAL, and works hard to make reasonable adjustments to meet them. We recognise that some groups of children are statistically more likely to be bullied or abused or may have difficulty telling an adult what is happening to them. The school takes particular care to create opportunities for children to share their concerns.

- **Care, guidance and support**

The school has clear procedures in place to provide appropriate support for children with SEND or who are in the early stages of learning English. The school has a SENCo and an EAL Coordinator to manage this provision. There is a special focus during times of transition between schools, key stages or classes.

- **Parental/carer involvement**

At the point of admission, parents are asked to inform us of any disability they may have that may impact on their engagement with school, including mobility and communication issues, so that support can be offered. BME parents are invited to meet with our BME Coordinator to discuss any issues that may arise from their ethnic, religious or cultural background. The school subsequently monitors parental engagement with parents' evenings and follows up any significant disengagement.

- **Working with the wider community and community cohesion**

The school works hard to engage with its community through links with the Sabah Singh Gurdwara, local schools and organisations. Relations in the area are positive and incidents are rare.

- **Behaviour, discipline and exclusions**

The school's behaviour code clearly promotes consideration and respect for others together with honesty and fairness. It is made explicit that the school will not tolerate bullying or racism and has a clear approach to dealing with any incidents that may occur.

- **Teaching styles and strategies**

Teaching staff are encouraged take into consideration children's backgrounds or disabilities in order to ensure teaching methods engage all children and meet their different needs and learning preferences.

- **Staff recruitment, retention and professional development**

Staff appointments are undertaken as part of a fair and open process offering equality of access to short lists for people with protected characteristics.

- **Inclusion**

Our Equality Policy is part of our strategy for making this a reality for all involved with our school, including those with a protected characteristic.

6. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school accepts its duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as foster positive relationships between groups and individuals in school.

Our Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy confirm that we accept the definition of a hate incident as being:

“Any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender's prejudice against people because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other reason.”

The school takes its obligations seriously and has clear procedures for dealing with reported incidents of bullying or harassment as set out in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Any prejudiced-based incidents are recorded and reported annually to the governing body.

The school's curriculum, PHSCE and assembly programmes emphasise the value of supportive and friendly relationships and attention is drawn to the consequences of prejudice, harassment and discrimination appropriate to the age of the child.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The **governing body** is responsible for ensuring the school complies with Equality legislation. It also keeps under review the Equality Policy, the school's practice and related procedures and monitors any agreed action plans. The Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare is the committee responsible.

7.2 The **Head Teacher** is responsible for the overall implementation of the policy on a day to day basis, but this may be delegated as appropriate to a member of the leadership team. The Head teacher is also responsible for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination; and for ensuring that *all* staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation and that they are given appropriate training and support to meet these responsibilities.

7.3 **All staff** have a responsibility to keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work, and must support the ethos of the school through their actions. All staff must undertake their work activities mindful of equalities issues, including planning, assessment, and individual support for pupils and groups of pupils. Staff should therefore demonstrate an awareness of specific individual needs and promote respect for diversity. All staff are expected to promote supportive relationships and to respond to, and deal with, any prejudice-related incidents which occur.

8. Information and Resources

The Equality Policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, governors, parents (via the newsletter). Equality information is collected routinely and reported to governors annually as part of the school's monitoring programme. The Head Teacher's Report includes annually a breakdown of the ethnic breakdown of the school together with EAL data. The Equality Policy and governor monitoring reports are available on request from the Head Teacher.

9. Staff Development and Training

The school provides periodic training for its staff and governors to raise awareness of equality issues. The staff induction programme includes reference to our Equality Policy and procedures to ensure consistency of practice.

10. Breaches of the Policy

Any concerns or complaints about the implementation of the policy, or any infringement of it, will be dealt with under the governors' complaints procedure which is available on request from the school office. The procedure allows for an informal stage under which issues should be discussed in the first instance with the Head Teacher.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

To help us monitor the impact of our Equality Policy, the school collects and analyses the following data for SEND, EAL and BME children:

- **Attainment and progress** compared with their peers in school and nationally
- **Attendance and punctuality** compared with their peers
- **Behaviour** incidents and exclusions including bullying and racist incidents
- **Parental attendance** at Review meetings and parents' evenings
- **Parental Surveys** are undertaken periodically to gain perceptions of the school's policy in practice

The data is reported to governors annually as part of the school's monitoring programme and used to evaluate the impact of our Equality policy and procedures and update the Equality Action Plan.

Policy dated: January 2018

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