

Bressingham Primary School



Single Equality Plan

Introduction

Bressingham Primary is bound by the public sector equality duty to advance equality in school. Equality of opportunity for all pupils underpins our practice in school.

Statutory requirements

Background

The Equality Act 2010 has replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

For Bressingham Primary, for the most part, the effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that Bressingham Primary cannot unlawfully discriminate against anyone because of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Protection is now extended to those who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. This means that it is now unlawful to discriminate against a transgender person or a person who is pregnant or has recently had a baby.

This policy seeks to combine the existing policies into a single equality scheme, which is effective in fulfilling our duties under the PSED.

There are two kinds of duty that Bressingham Primary must meet: the general which is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the specific. There are two specific duties; these are that schools should:

- publish information which shows compliance with the PSED and
- publish at least one equality objective.

The specific duties are meant to help schools and public bodies fulfil their obligations under the general duty.

This policy aims to make our practice transparent - making information available so that the school's local community can see how the school is advancing equality in line with the PSED, and what objectives it is using to make this happen.

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By 6 April 2012 the specific duties require our school to have published information showing compliance with the public sector equality duty, plus also at least one equality objective. We will then need to update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years. Examples of possible objectives might be relating to closing gap in attainment in English for different 'groups' of pupils that the school has identified as underachieving, or improving the attendance rates of pupils from a background where these may be low. These should be specific and measurable.

Our current equality objective is stated in our school development plan as follows:

- **Attainment and progress in national tests at the end of KS2 is very high and continues the improving trend, particularly for SEN and Pupil Premium pupils** and higher achievers: [we have an aspirational aim for all to achieve the expected level and 50% \(+\) to achieve the higher level or Greater Depth.](#)

Equality and discrimination in school

We will not discriminate against pupils through our admission policy or in our day-to-day operations, such as in the allocation of pupils to particular classes. There are exceptions regarding the following:

- school curriculum and collective worship are not covered by legislation affecting discrimination on grounds of religion or beliefs
- schools may treat disabled pupils more favourably than others if it prevents them being at a disadvantage
- age discrimination legislation does not apply to the treatment of pupils or provision of education.

We carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils and review our plan annually. These are the same duties that previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the Equality Act. We will implement an accessibility plan which is aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, parents and carers.

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At Bressingham, we focus not only on the physical access, but also on access to the curriculum. We report twice-yearly to governors on the attainment and progress of these pupils. We also monitor the participation of these groups in after school activities and out of school activities such as trips and sports events.

We maintain a register of the pupil groups listed above and use our available support creatively to address any gaps in achievement.

Our accessibility plan is a separate policy, which is available from the school office. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. In this way, the accessibility plan will remain effective and relevant.

Overview

The public sector equality duty requires schools to have **due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations** for pupils, staff and others using school facilities.

Meeting these three requirements contributes greatly to achieving the best possible progress and attainment because achievement of these aims means that the school community experiences and enjoys an ethos and atmosphere of dignity and fairness, where everyone is free to develop themselves, knowing that differences are respected. Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and take responsibility for their actions and become good citizens.

At Bressingham, we focus on meeting the PSED requirements by:

securing and maintaining excellent teaching, learning and assessment for all pupils;

- Strong leadership and self-evaluation;
- Very effective teaching assistant support.

'narrowing the gaps' in achievement between identified groups and national standards;

- Careful tracking and reporting against ambitious targets;
- Groups identified and carefully tracked – robust intervention where pupils fall behind.

ensuring pupils are free from bullying in all its manifestations including all types of prejudice-based bullying;

- All key policies refer to prejudice-based bullying and school operates a zero tolerance of bullying approach.

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- Incidents (though rare) are recorded and followed up after the event to ensure that the pattern of behaviour hasn't re-started.

Dealing with unacceptable behaviour and disruptions to learning;

- Where behaviour is highly challenging and unacceptable, external support is sought and a plan is put in place to deal with the behaviour.
- Disruptions to learning are minimised and the curriculum is reviewed to ensure that it is matched to the needs of the pupil.

Building cohesive school communities where all pupils can thrive.

- Our buddy system and cross phase / key stage working bond our school together.
- We engage with parents and the community through a range of strategies. This includes strategies to engage with the parents of pupils with disabilities and those with protected characteristics.

How we advance equality of opportunity:

- Analysing data to identify differences in achievement between groups and acting to address the differences
- Review every aspect of the curriculum and school life to ensure that it provides opportunity for every pupil
- Discriminating positively where this appears necessary

How we tackle discrimination:

- We review our curriculum to ensure that people with protected characteristics are represented positively.
- We record, report and monitor any prejudice related incidents (Appendix 7 – Racial Equality Policy) This is reported termly in the Safeguarding report to governors.
- Strategies to address unacceptable behaviour are set out in our behaviour and attendance and anti-bullying policies.

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How we foster good relations:

- We treat all those in the school community as individuals
- We make every effort to see at least one parent of every child to discuss their progress at least twice a year
- We have an open door policy for parents so they can speak to any member of staff
- We positively engage with parents by greeting them in the morning and being available on the gate at the end of the day
- We are proactive in getting to know parents and make a beeline for parents from harder to reach groups
- We have put our newsletters online and send copies of reports to those adults with parental responsibility, who no longer live with their children and for whom we have addresses

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- We follow the SEAL programme and have circle time
- We have an active school council and buddy system
- Our curriculum is being reviewed and developed to extend opportunities for SMSC via the RHSE curriculum, to be introduced by September 2020

Promoting and monitoring participation by learners in all the opportunities that the school provides

- This is monitored through the school office and evaluated by the Headteacher
- Projects are sometimes planned to engage these groups

How we identify whether there are any barriers for particular groups of pupils and evaluate the curriculum.

- Our inclusion leader monitors and evaluates the curriculum and produces reports for governors

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Achievement of pupils at the school

The school keeps data about the school population and differences of outcome. For example,

The school has and analyses up-to-date data on its pupils broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender, and by proficiency in English (where appropriate). This includes detail about significant differences in attainment between girls and boys, and between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those with protected characteristics, the highest and lowest attainers, pupils receiving pupil premium and those receiving alternative provision.

The school uses entry and transition information to shape provision to meet the diverse needs of pupils.

The school maintains data on its pupils broken down by types of impairment and special educational need.

The school maintains data on inequalities of outcome and participation connected with ethnicity, gender and disability, and with proficiency in literacy and numeracy.

The school uses data on inequalities of outcome and participation when setting itself objectives for achievable and measurable improvements. These targets form part of the School Improvement Plan.

Teaching

Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils, for example those who are learning English as an additional language or disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and there is extra or special provision for certain groups, as appropriate to the school and its circumstances.

The curriculum addresses equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and understanding diversity.

There are activities across the curriculum that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Seating and grouping arrangements help to foster good relations and respect between different groups of pupils.

Teaching and curriculum materials in all subjects aim to have positive images of disabled people; of gay and lesbian people; of both women and men in non-stereotypical gender roles; and of people from a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

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Behaviour and safety

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents, and appropriate staff training that equips staff to identify and deal with this effectively. These procedures are identified in the anti-bullying and attendance and behaviour policies.

Questionnaires and focused discussion groups are used to see how safe pupils feel from all kinds of bullying, harassment and unacceptable behaviour e.g. governors' survey of playground safety and resulting action, school council bullying surveys, pupil bullying surveys, parent Ofsted and bullying surveys. These actions also identify how confident pupils are that staff will address all issues of discrimination and prejudice including the use of derogatory language.

Our school aims and policies promote respect among pupils and staff. This includes behaviour that does not disrupt the learning of others.

Leadership and management

At Bressingham Primary we make reference to our equality work in the School Improvement Plan, the prospectus and our website.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for equality.

The Curriculum Committee has responsibility for equalities within the governing body and has led in the writing of this policy.

The school's programme for continuing professional development (CPD) is inclusive of all staff and includes equalities matters, both directly and incidentally.

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching, support and administrative.

Where evidence from surveys or self-evaluation reveals inequalities, this is addressed robustly.

We are a small school and so when we are discussing or reporting on equalities issues relating to identifiable individuals, we take care to protect identities or to ensure confidentiality, as appropriate.

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Appendix 1 – The Brown Principles

There are six principles, called the Brown Principles, established by case law that underpin what due regard means: awareness, timeliness, rigour, non-delegation, continuous, and record-keeping:

awareness – all staff should know and understand what the law requires

timeliness – the implications for equalities of new policies and practices should be considered before they are introduced

rigour – there should be rigorous and open-minded analysis of statistical evidence, and careful attention to the views of staff, and the views of pupils and their parents and/or carers

non-delegation – compliance with the PSED cannot be delegated

continuous – due regard for equalities should be happening all the time

record-keeping – it is good practice to keep documentary records, for example in the minutes of staff meetings and governor meetings.

Appendix 2 – National projects and award schemes

Bressingham Primary participates in the following or is looking into introducing:

Black History Month

Culture Week

Appendix 3 – Reporting on equality characteristics and groups

We aim to follow the OfSTED guidance on reporting, which is as follows:

Context

The reviewing of reports by the equalities and human rights team, the quality assurance and complaints team has highlighted two issues relating to the reporting of 'groups' and characteristics, including the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act, 2010.

Issue

The two issues are:

How to protect the identity of an individual or individuals where numbers are low.

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How to report on the groups and/or characteristics in a sensitive and clear way that identifies issues facing the individuals and avoids possible reinforcement of stereotyping that it is intended to highlight for action.

These issues are still pertinent since inspectors will continue to inspect and report on the achievement of different groups of pupils – the evaluation schedule for schools, January 2012 has an illustrative list on page 5 – and learners in the revised inspection frameworks.¹

Guidance

Inspection guidance, training and updates should continue to emphasise that care must be taken by inspectors when reporting on equality for individuals and/or very small groups to safeguard their identity. This applies to the description or background information of a provider and the reporting of outcomes. The writing guidance on reporting has advice on how to report on proportions.

For example omitting numbers if they are small such as '*the home caters very well for the [three] disabled children it looks after*', as long as the meaning is not lost and it does not give a misleading impression.

The section in Ofsted's style guide on *Inclusive language*, paragraphs 57 to 68, and the glossary provide clear guidance on this:

Language can play an important role in promoting (or undermining) social equalities. Using inclusive language avoids inadvertent bias. There continues to be debate among interested groups about the most appropriate vocabulary, and we recognise that some people will prefer terms other than those approved by Ofsted and recommended in this guide. The terminology used here reflects the language used in relevant legislation and associated codes of practice. This guide

was prepared following consultation involving Age Concern England, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Mencap, Participation Works, the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) and Stonewall. It also reflects Ofsted's equality schemes, which were subject to extensive consultation. Please see the Glossary at the end of the guide for information on specific terms not mentioned in the following paragraphs.

¹ As an aspect of achievement, inspectors are required to evaluate how well gaps are narrowing between the performance of different groups of pupils in the school and compared to all pupils nationally.

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Treat people as individuals; no race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age group or religion should be stereotyped or arbitrarily given a leading or subordinate role.

If writing about adults, refer to 'men' and 'women'. Use 'male' and 'female' only where the age range referred to includes adults, young people and children.

Ofsted prefers to use the terms 'disabled person' and 'disabled people' rather than 'person with a disability' and 'people with disabilities'. The social model of disability explains that impairment does not have to lead to disability. Disability occurs when people are excluded, because of their impairment, from something that other people in society take for granted, such as the opportunity to attend an event or take part in an activity, to be kept informed or make use of a service, to live independently or earn a living, or just to make choices for themselves.

Ofsted's current position is that the term 'minority ethnic' is preferable to 'black and minority ethnic' as a collective term for ethnic groups that are minorities in Britain. When referring to black people or groups, it is appropriate to use 'Black', with an initial capital, as this form has become a signifier of social, cultural and political identity.

'Black' and 'White' should both have initial capitals when they form part of a specific census category, such as 'Black Caribbean' or 'Any other White background'. These categories may appear in questionnaires and survey results.

Gypsy and Traveller should have initial capitals.

When referring to a person's sexual orientation, it is appropriate to describe someone as heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual. The term 'homosexual' is not used. Stonewall recommends that the word 'lesbian' should be used as a noun (for example, 'she is a lesbian'), and that the words 'gay' and 'bisexual' should only be used as adjectives. When referring to a group or community of people who are not heterosexual, it is appropriate to use the collective term 'lesbian, gay and bisexual people'. This is often abbreviated to LGB people, but Ofsted style prefers to avoid abbreviations where possible.

'Transgender' is an inclusive term used to reflect the diversity of gender identity and expression. Because of a related history of inequality, it has sometimes been added to 'lesbian, gay and bisexual' (see above) to produce 'lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people'. However, this is best avoided, as gender

and sexual orientation are different categories. In equalities monitoring questionnaires, they should appear in separate sections.

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Refer to 'older people', not 'old people' or 'the elderly'.

From age 14, refer to 'young people', not 'children'.

Referring to 'vulnerable young people' or 'hard-to-reach groups' may give the impression that these are innate characteristics. At the first mention, it is better to refer instead to 'young people whose circumstances have made them vulnerable' or 'groups whose circumstances have made them hard to reach'.

To avoid giving offence and possible idea of stereotyping, use of 'The' in relation to people or groups of people requires forethought and care about the meaning conveyed, even though this may be a nuance. For example '*the Poles represent a large section of the community*' might be more sensitively expressed as '*The town/area has a large Polish community*'.

Appendix 4

Protected characteristics

The following are the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

age

disability

gender reassignment

marriage and civil partnership

pregnancy and maternity

race

religion or belief

sex

sexual orientation.

The protected characteristics of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnerships' do not apply to schools.

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Appendix 5

Definition of disability

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. A disabled person is someone who has a

- Physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence, People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included. If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

Appendix 6

List of reporting duties to governors and parents (effective from February 2013):

- must publish at least one equality objective
- must publish information which shows compliance with the PSED
- we have agreed to report twice-yearly to governors on the attainment and progress of pupil premium pupils, disabled pupils and other pupils with protected characteristics
- we have agreed to maintain a register of the above pupils and to use our available support creatively to address any gaps in achievement
- we will report termly to governors on progress with this plan
- we report any prejudice related incidents termly in the Safeguarding report
- our inclusion leader makes clear reference to these groups in their twice-yearly reports
- we analyse data by year group, ethnicity, proficiency in English (where appropriate), DSEN and protected characteristics, pupil premium, those receiving alternative provision and the highest and lowest attainers.

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- We maintain data on inequalities of outcome and participation connected with ethnicity, gender and disability and by proficiency in literacy and numeracy.

Appendix 7 Single Equality School Plan

This plan incorporates gender equality planning, disability discrimination planning, our accessibility plan and general equality improvement planning. This plan also forms part of our School Improvement and Development Plan.

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