

Central Primary School



Equality Policy

Our motto: Children are Central.

Introduction

We are committed to giving all our staff and children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of people's varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, and adults, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, sexuality or background.

This policy accords with the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2006
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act (2002)
- Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2007

Aims

- We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or background.
- We seek to ensure that all staff have equal access to the full range of professional opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers for some groups.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We value each person's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.

Objectives

It is unlawful to:

- Decide not to employ someone based on their gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, or race.
- Dismiss them or make them redundant
- Refuse to provide them with training
- Deny them promotion
- Give them adverse terms and conditions
- Withhold fair and accurate references
- Retire an employee before the default retirement age of 65 without an objective justification.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we seek to;

- a) **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the act
- b) **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- c) **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Our Published Equality Objective:

As a school we are working on the current objective to promote greater equality between all members of our school community:

To ensure that everyone is able to achieve their potential

Some of the ways we are working towards this objective are:

- To narrow the discrepancies between pupils belonging to different ethnic backgrounds, genders and linguistic groups and national figures of attainment and achievement
- To promote positive aspirations for all pupils, giving them access to a range of career aspirations
- To work with the community to remove and reduce barriers for accessing education and opportunities

More links can be found in the current development plans for the school. Our progress will be reviewed regularly and our procedures adapted and amended.

Age Discrimination:

It is unlawful to discriminate, treat unfairly or harass workers, employees, job applicants and trainees because of their age, or the age they appear to be.

Hertfordshire, and this school, are committed to promoting age equality and reducing age discrimination and have adopted a 'no retirement age' policy which will apply to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. This means that a person can work past the age of 65 for as long as they are able to, as long as they are fit and healthy and able to do the job for which they are employed.

Disability

- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 2005) makes it unlawful for a school to treat a disabled job applicant, or an employee, less favourably simply because of their disability. Schools also have a duty under the DDA to make reasonable adjustments to prevent a disabled employee from being placed at a substantial disadvantage by any physical feature of the premises, or by any provision, criteria or practice of the school.
- The DDA defines a person as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:
 - Substantial (more than minor or trivial)
 - Adverse
 - Long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected)

- The DDA also covers people who have cancer, MS, HIV/AIDS, who have had heart surgery, are on kidney dialysis, people with diabetes, stammer, dyslexia, mental health service users, people with severe disfigurements and learning disabilities. Protection is not only to disabled people themselves, but also to those who are perceived to be disabled, are associated with disabled people.
- Schools are required to make a 'reasonable adjustment' to working conditions or the workplace to overcome the practical effects of a disability. These may include:
 - Altering the person's working hours
 - Allowing absences during working hours for medical treatment
 - Giving additional training or changing instructions or reference manuals
 - Special equipment, modifying existing equipment or making adjustments to premises
 - Providing additional supervision and/or support.

Gender

- The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate, treat unfairly or harass workers, employees, job applicants and trainees because of their gender.
- Harassment is defined as 'any conduct, relating to gender, which has the intent or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that person'.
- In employment it is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of being:
 - Male or Female
 - Married or a Civil Partner
 - Gender Reassigned
 - Gender Identity
- Schools are covered by the Public Sector Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity and good gender relations in the delivery of their functions.
- This new legislation includes:
 - Statutory Maternity Pay timescales increase from 26 to 39 weeks
 - Maternity leave transferable to fathers
 - The right to request flexible working extended to employees caring for elderly or disabled relatives.
- The Equal Pay Act requires equality of treatment in pay and contractual terms between women and men doing 'like work'. A member of staff considering an equal pay claim may serve an 'equal pay questionnaire' on the school.
- Transgender status - Protection against discrimination is available as soon as it is known that a worker intends to go through the process of sex change. Transsexual people who have registered with the Gender Recognition Panel can be recognised, marry, and receive a new birth certificate – all using their required gender.

Race

- The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate, treat unfairly or harass workers, employees, job applicants and trainees because of their race. Everyone is protected equally, whatever their race or racial origin.
- The term race includes: colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, citizenship as well as race.

- Hertfordshire uses the term BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) as being the most appropriate term to use when referring to people from racial or ethnic groups other than the white majority ethnic group.
- We are committed to challenging all forms of racial discrimination.

Religion and Belief

- The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate, treat unfairly or harass workers on grounds of the workers actual or perceived religion, religious belief or similar philosophy.
- The law does not expressly require schools to provide staff with time off or special facilities for religious purposes, and schools are not obliged to accept unreasonable disruption to its activities on account of staff members' religious needs. A member of staff, however, whose religious beliefs involve practices associated with not working on a particular day of the week or on specified dates during the year is protected in law.

Sexual Orientation

- The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate, treat unfairly or harass workers, employees, job applicants and trainees on the grounds that they are, or are perceived to be, gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.
- In many cases a school may not know the sexual orientation of their staff members, and arguably there is no reason why they should know, since the regulations do not place an obligation on individuals to disclose their sexual orientation, even in a court or tribunal hearing. Evidence suggests, however, that gay and lesbian staff members are particularly likely to be the victims of stereotyping, prejudice and harassment in the workplace. Many will conceal their sexual orientation for fear of unfavourable treatment by colleagues, pupils or by the school generally.
- We are committed to providing fair treatment and equal access to employment and development opportunities. We will take action to ensure that lesbian and gay employees are able to work in an environment which values them as individuals and is free from discrimination and harassment.

The role of governors

- In this policy statement the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.
- The governing body will, in its minutes, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever the background of the person.
- The governing body ensures that no person is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion, gender, sexuality or race.
- The governors will, in consultation with the headteacher, draw up a plan for implementing this policy. This plan will be personal to the school and reflect the schools circumstances and community. It will be reviewed annually and be based on sound feedback from all sections of the school community.

The role of the headteacher

- It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and s/he is supported by the governing body in so doing.

- It is the headteacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.
- The headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.
- The headteacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any discriminatory incidents, with due concern.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- require the headteacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually or earlier if it is considered necessary.