

**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY**

**Link governors:** Denise Wilson

**Policy written by:** Elaine Armstrong; updated by Lisa Wood

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**1. Aims**

The overall objective of Hylton Castle Primary School's Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members. Partners and contractors are also expected to abide by the policy.

**2. Objectives**

**Objective 1:**

To continue to treat all children and adults with courtesy, respect, integrity and dignity

**Objective 2:**

To continue to ensure that all children progress and achieve with equality

**Objective 3:**

To continue to challenge any type of intolerant attitude, comment or action that undermines the value or dignity of others

**3. Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Statement**

We will not tolerate less favourable treatment of anyone, particularly in relation to age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, or sexuality.

Through our school ethos, curriculum and community links, we will work towards:

- a common vision
- a sense of belonging for all
- similar life opportunities for all
- strong and positive relationships between different communities.

Through the Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy, Hylton Castle Primary School seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be justified. Consequently, this not only covers the 9 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil

partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, and sexuality, but also relates to socio-economic background, where people reside, those responsible for children or other dependents, those who engage in political or trade union activities, and those with spent convictions.

Commitment to equality, diversity and community cohesion is more than just meeting legal obligations or targets. It's about making a difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual. This implies an ongoing commitment to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of all the children and young people in our school. We will make sure that our employment practices are fair, promote equality and value diversity. We will actively value the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures which exist locally and nationally. We will prepare children and young people for life in a diverse society with ever-increasing global connections, and help them to deal in an informed manner with sometimes controversial issues.

We will ensure that the principles of this policy are reflected in all our policies, practices, procedures and services and are part of everything we do.

Hylton Castle Primary School is a school of average size, where the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils have English as a second language. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school has achieved the National Healthy School Standard, Investors in People Award, Silver Artsmark, Activemark, International Award, Eco Projects Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, and the local authority's Anti-Bullying Accreditation.

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

These principles have been drawn from a specimen school policy for equality and diversity prepared by the DCSF and we at Hylton Castle Primary School fully endorse and accept them.

##### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

##### **Principle 2: Relevant differences are recognised**

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face.

##### **Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging**

Policies, practices and programmes promote:

- positive attitudes and interactions
- mutual respect and good relations

- an absence of harassment or prejudice-related bullying between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

**Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development**

Policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion. Steps are taken to positively promote equality, especially where there is evidence of inequality.

**Principle 5: Current inequalities and barriers are addressed and reduced**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

**Principle 6: Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement**

People affected by a policy are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Such consultation is both direct and through representative organisations, and is based on principles of transparency and accountability. It involves those who in the past have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who continue to face barriers.

**Principle 7: Society as a whole benefits**

Policies benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life of people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

**5. Equality and Diversity Legislation**

Our commitment is reinforced through our legal duties both as an employer and service provider. The legal duties come from a range of relevant equality and diversity legislation and associated codes of practice. Through this policy we are committed to complying with the general and specific duties, as well as the codes of practice. See Appendices 1 and 2 for more about these duties and codes of practice.

**Age**

All public bodies have responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training irrespective of age, through the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006). The Equality Act (2010) makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services, facilities and public functions (2012). We will ensure that we follow these regulations and legislative requirements.

**Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Acts (1995, 2001 and 2005) place a positive duty on us to ensure that services provided by the school and its premises are accessible to disabled people, that we promote disability equality, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and promote positive attitudes to encourage participation. In some situations this may mean treating disabled people more favourably. We have drawn up and will maintain a Disability Equality Scheme (part of the Single Equality Scheme), including an action plan, to meet these responsibilities.

### **Gender**

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and the Equality Act (2006) place a positive duty on us not to treat anyone unfairly because of their gender. This means we will eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between girls and boys, men and women. We will ensure that the needs of both sexes and transgender people are taken into account in our services and employment. We have drawn up and will maintain a Gender Equality Scheme (part of the Single Equality Scheme), including an action plan, to meet these responsibilities.

### **Race**

The Race Relations Act (1976) and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) require schools to take appropriate steps to promote race equality, eliminate unlawful race discrimination and promote good race relations. We have drawn up and will maintain a Race Equality Scheme (part of our Single Equality Scheme), including an action plan, to meet these responsibilities.

### **Religion and Belief**

All public bodies have responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training irrespective of religion and belief through the Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations (2003). The Equality Act (2006) makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services, facilities and public functions. We will ensure that we follow these regulations.

### **Sexual Orientation**

All public bodies have responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training irrespective of sexual orientation through the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003). The Equality Act (2006) makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services, facilities and public functions. We will ensure that we follow these regulations.

### **Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, and Pregnancy and Maternity**

The Equality Act (2010) makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone in relation to gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. Discrimination might be direct or indirect, or involve harassment or victimisation. We will ensure that we do not discriminate in relation to these protected characteristics.

### **Community Cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) places a responsibility on schools to promote community cohesion within the school itself as well as locally, nationally and globally. We will do this through promoting a common vision, a commitment to equality and social justice, respecting people's different backgrounds, and promoting positive relationships in the school and local neighbourhood. We recognise that the biggest influence on educational outcomes is social class and that this can also strongly affect community cohesion. We have programmes to 'close the gap' and to draw people together from different social backgrounds. Pupil premium money is used to support this.

### **Future legislation**

We will also welcome the contribution of future equality and diversity legislation to provide equal opportunities for everyone.

## 6. Implementation

We will ensure implementation through action in the following areas:

- **Relationships and ethos** – to foster behaviour based on rights, responsibilities and mutual respect between all members of the school community, to support pupils' personal development and well-being, and to address all forms of prejudice-related bullying.
- **Equity and excellence** – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and other activities, and to minimise variations in outcomes for different groups.
- **Teaching, learning and the curriculum** – to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- **Engagement and extended services** – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different school communities locally, nationally and internationally.

## 7. Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure it is effective in tackling discrimination, in promoting access and participation, and in promoting equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the school community.

Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessments is used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The Headteacher provides monitoring reports for review by the Governing Body. These include information about: school population, workforce recruitment, retention and progression, special initiatives, progress against Key Indicators and targets, and future plans. Normally the reports will be found in the Headteacher's Report to Governors.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

All who are associated with Hylton Castle Primary School have a responsibility for promoting inclusion, equality, diversity and community cohesion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

### **Our governors are responsible for:**

- Making sure the school complies with all current equality and diversity legislation.
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed.
- Making sure that the school has an up-to-date Single Equality Scheme and related action plans.

### **Our Headteacher is responsible for:**

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents know about it.
- Making sure its procedures are followed.

- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

**All our staff are responsible for:**

- Proactively following this policy and any associated guidelines.
- Providing role models for pupils through their own actions.
- Responding to prejudice-related incidents as they occur.
- Promoting equality, diversity and good community relations, and avoiding discrimination against anyone based on the nine protected characteristics above, as well as avoiding discrimination irrespective of socio-economic background or where people reside, as well as against those responsible for children or other dependents, those who engage in political or trade union activities, and those with spent convictions.
  - promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom/workspace
  - incorporating the principles of this policy into the curriculum
- keeping up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

**All our pupils are responsible for:**

- Treating others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination or harassment.
- Attending school and engaging in their learning, as well as helping other pupils to learn.
- Telling staff about any prejudice-related incidents that occur.

**All our parents are responsible for:**

- Supporting our school as it implements this policy.
- Providing role models for their children through their own actions.
- Ensuring their children attend school and engage in learning.
- Telling staff about any prejudice-related incidents that occur.

**9. Breaches of the Policy**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body. Anyone wishing to make a complaint will be advised to follow the School Complaints Procedure.

Racist incidents and all other prejudice-driven behaviour will be recorded and reported in school.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Community Cohesion**

A **cohesive** community is one where:

- There is a common vision for all communities, an emphasis on articulating what binds communities together rather than what differences divide them, a sense of belonging, of identifying with the neighbourhood and of 'looking out for each other'
- There is a commitment to equality and social justice
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated, respected and protected, in order to support integration and cohesion in changing communities
- People have similar life opportunities, irrespective of background
- Everyone understands their rights and responsibilities and is encouraged to participate at all levels
- Strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The National Community Cohesion Standards are framed by four strategic aims:

- Close the attainment and achievement gap between different groups of people
- Develop common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity
- Contribute to building good community relations and challenge all types of discrimination and inequality
- Remove the barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement.

The DCSF Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion suggests that a school's contribution to community cohesion relates, above all, to:

- **Relationships and ethos** – to foster behaviour based on rights, responsibilities and mutual respect between all members of the school community, to support pupils' personal development and well-being, and to address all forms of prejudice-related bullying.
  - **Teaching, learning and the curriculum** – to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
  - **Equity and excellence** – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
  - **Engagement and extended services** – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different school communities locally, nationally and internationally.

In order to achieve a **cohesive community**, we recognise that we need to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities

- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- Understand the needs and hopes of all our communities
- Tackle discrimination
- Increase life opportunities for all
- Ensure teaching and the curriculum address issues of diversity.

This policy has been written with reference to The Equality Act 2010 and The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.

### **Inclusion Statement**

At Hylton Castle Primary School, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

Pupils have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Pupils with a disability have special educational needs if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them, which is anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in schools in the area.

At Hylton Castle Primary School we undertake the duties, including in relation to **this policy**:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason which relates to their disability
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- To do our best by all disabled members of our school community in relation to the requirements of this particular policy

### **Equality & Diversity Statement**

Hylton Castle Primary School fully recognises its duty to comply with equality and diversity legislation, and its Gender Equality Scheme sets out the school's aims in relation to equality and what it will do to ensure that equality is fully embedded in practice. The school fully acknowledges its responsibilities in terms of equality issues in relation to gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, including in relation to **this policy**.

Hylton Castle Primary School is firmly committed to equality and diversity, and when carrying out our functions, we shall have due regard to the need: to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

**This Policy should be read in conjunction with the School's:**

- **SEND Policy**
- **Admissions Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Child Protection Policy**