



DORMSTON SCHOOL

Equality of Opportunity & Diversity Policy

Introduction

This policy describes the way in which The Dormston School will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaces all previous legislation.

The Equality Act replaces the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, much of the Equality Act 2006, the Employment Equality (Religion or Beliefs) Regulations 2003, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 and Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007.

Specific key components – Public Sector Single Equality Duty

The Act introduced the new 'single' equality duty to replace the existing race, disability and gender equality duties by 2011.

At The Dormston School we understand the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society. We respect all members of our school community and value the differences between us. Not only do we believe in establishing a safe, secure and open community in which we protect the individuals in our care but we also strive to develop attitudes and philosophies amongst the members of our school community so that they may play their own part in promoting equality in the wider community.

Overview

This Policy sets out this school's approach to promoting equality and diversity. It outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of The Dormston School to ensure equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. This means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. The purpose of the

Equality & Diversity Policy is about providing equality for all, in order to promote the highest possible standards. The school population and local community includes individuals from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, linguistic and socio economic backgrounds, those with disabilities, refugees, asylum seekers, looked after children and travellers. The latest census information states 96.9% of the local population as white, 1.6% as mixed, 0.7% as Asian or Asian British and 0.8% as Black or British Black. This compares to the school population as 84.5% White British and 15.5% as other ethnicity as well as 55.1% girls on roll and 44.9% boys.

The school aims to ensure that no pupils, staff, parent/carers or any other person through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political affiliation, social class, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The Dormston School has a simple philosophy to ensure the school community strives to be aware of the school ethos by following the following principles:

- all learners are of equal value;
- we recognise and respect difference;
- we foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging;
- we observe good equality practice in staff recruitment, retention and development as per Dudley Council policies;
- we aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist;
- we consult and involve widely;
- society as a whole should benefit;
- we base our policies and practices on sound advice;
- we will give ourselves measurable objectives;

Understanding the Terminology – Defining Terms

Diversity

The term Diversity is capable of many interpretations. In the context of equalities work it is often taken to mean the differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspective, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, ability or disability, skills, knowledge, age and life experiences of each individual in any group of people. It is not the same as 'equal opportunities'.

Valuing diversity refers to demonstrably valuing diverse employees, pupils and stakeholders by having policy and procedures that take their diverse needs and preferences into account.

Equality

Equality (or Equalities) is a shorthand term referring to the range of work aimed at ensuring the full and fair participation of marginalised or underrepresented groups, where these groups may be excluded from full and fair participation as a result of discrimination and disadvantage, or other barriers. This has a particular reference to age, disability, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or transgender.

Equal Opportunities

This is the development of practices that promote the possibility of fair and equal chances for everyone, so that they may develop their full potential in all aspects of life. It is concerned with the removal of the barriers to discrimination and disadvantage which are experienced by others.

Discrimination

Direct discrimination under the law means treating a person less favourably on grounds of their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, gender or marital status, gender identity, or for reasons relating to a person's disability.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a rule, condition or requirement, which applies equally to everyone, has a disproportionately adverse effect on people from a particular group (i.e. due to age, disability, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or transgender), and there is no objective justification for the rule.

Aims and Values

The Dormston School is an all-inclusive community school which embraces inclusivity and welcomes all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Ethnic and cultural diversity are enriching for the school and therefore for the local community and society. All staff, pupils and stakeholders are encouraged to develop their abilities to the full and feel comfortable and valued in themselves and respected by others. We are committed to building a fully inclusive community within the Borough of Dudley. The objective is for the school using Dudley Council policies to promote equality and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. The school will endeavour to create a community where pupils are well prepared for life in a diverse society.

Ethos & Organisation

We ensure the guiding principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those concerned with:

- pupils progress attainment and achievement;

- pupils personal development and well being;
- teaching styles and strategies;
- admissions and attendance;
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development;
- behaviour and exclusions;
- working in partnership with parents and carers;
- working with the wider community.

Leadership, Management and Governance

The Governing Body is committed to meeting its duties under equality legislation and aims to follow the good practice set out in the statutory codes of practice and guidance which support the legislation. While the governing body has overall responsibility to ensure that equality is promoted throughout the school it is the responsibility of all staff, including those helping on a voluntary basis, and partner organisations to promote equality. The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The governing body will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the school's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work. The Dormston School ensures the involvement of staff and governors and, where appropriate, takes steps to enable the contribution of pupils and their parents/carers and other relevant parties. The governing body recognises that discrimination may occur on more than one ground at the same time and the equality of opportunity cannot be achieved by always treating all people alike. All staff are expected to promote an inclusive ethos in their classroom, deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur and plan and deliver curriculum that reflect the ethos above.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented.

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

Recruitment and Staff Development

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and Local Authority guidance. The school seeks to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels within the school. All those

involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.

Dudley Council routinely monitors all recruitment activity and staff in post as required by legislation and fulfils its responsibilities to provide data to appropriate bodies when necessary.

Staff receive appropriate training to enable them to deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and how to increase the awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. All staff receive training on the school's behavioural/safeguarding policy, with additional information on procedures for dealing with bullying and racist incidents.

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 Head teacher and governing body.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral system takes account of disability, gender, religious and ethnic differences, sexual orientation and experiences and particular needs of people living in a diverse society.

All pupils are provided with appropriate career advice and guidance and are encouraged to consider the full range of opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.

Support is given to victims of harassment and unacceptable behaviour and external agencies are involved, where appropriate. The school also recognises that perpetrators may also be victims and equally require support.

Positive role models such as the student leadership team are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community.

Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Our response to any prejudice-related bullying or racist incident will be swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective following our behaviour principles.

Equality monitoring data, including that relating to disability, ethnicity, gender and SEN will be used to monitor the attainment, progress and well-being of pupils, and, where appropriate, targets are set to address any identified inconsistencies.

The school will use monitored data, including that relating to disability, ethnicity, gender and SEN to monitor admissions, attendance, exclusions, attainment and progress and the use of sanctions and rewards. Where appropriate this data will be used to inform planning and decision making.

The schools procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are applied equally to all pupils. However; it is recognised that social/cultural background and other factors may affect behaviour, the school takes into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour, and all staff apply consistent systems of sanctions and rewards.

Exclusions and attendance are monitored closely and affective action is taken in order to reduce gaps between different groups of pupils.

Admissions

The admissions process is monitored by the Local Authority with a range of equality indicators to ensure that is administered fairly and equitably to pupils. Comprehensive information about pupil's ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc is included on all admission forms.

Pupil Attainment and Progress

In response to national and local data indicating disparity between the relative performances of different groups each curriculum leader has the individual data to assess and review and to set learning objectives to close any gaps identified. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, prior attainment, language, pupil premium entitlement, and gender.

Religious Observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with [reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice](#).

Statutory Requirements

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and this combined equality has 3 main elements referred to as the general duty:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relationships between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.

The specific duties required of the school are:

- Publish information to demonstrate how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

The equality strands covered in this policy that qualifies for protection from discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Legal Framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), region and belief, and sexual identity.

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

4. At present schools are permitted by law to do any of the following:

- draw up three separate policy statements, relating to disability, ethnicity and gender respectively
- draw up a single statement containing three separate sections
- draw up a single statement containing three recurring themes or threads, as in this policy statement.

As we have opted for the third of these, we have ensured that each of the three threads is explicitly mentioned throughout.

Equality Impact Assessments

This equality policy sets out the actions that will be taken to assess the impact or potential impact of school policies on the school community. These assessments include Equality Impact Assessments to identify the effect of school policies on people who are disabled, males and females, people from different ethnic groups, people with different religious beliefs and sexual orientation or people of transgender. The Dormston School takes guidance from Dudley Council on all policies that are adopted through the council procedures.

Information and Resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources available via the Dudley Council website which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

We collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

Dudley MBC Equality Policy Statement **Equality Policy Statement**

1. Introduction

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's equality policy provides the overall framework for meeting its commitment to advancing equality. The council recognises the importance of tackling discrimination and advancing equality between different groups in the community, whilst also addressing the diverse needs of individuals. The policy covers the council's own employment policies and practices, the provision of services and public functions, and its wider community leadership role.

The equality policy responds to and is supported by a range of other documents.

- The overall strategy for the borough, the community strategy for 2005-20, has as its vision the promotion of stronger communities throughout the borough. A primary aim throughout the strategy is to promote greater equality so that all people are able to make a full contribution to society.

- The council plan sets out the council's three year priorities and its contribution to achieving the aims of the community strategy.
- The equality scheme sets out the detailed approach to advancing equality over a three year period.
- Directorates' annual action plans set out the details about their own service areas
- A number of other policies and procedures, advice and guidance documents cover various equality and human resources issues.

While the policy is not driven just by legislation, it recognises the importance of ensuring that the Council can meet its statutory duties. These are mainly set out in the Equality Act 2010.

2. Overall Objective of the Policy

The overall objective of the Council's equality and diversity policy is to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations between people from different backgrounds.

This objective covers the council's employment policies and practices, and its services and public functions. The council will lead by example and will work with its partner organisations and the Borough's communities in order to achieve this objective.

The objective applies to all groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. The Council will also make sure that it does not treat less favourably on any grounds that cannot be shown to be justified people protected by other legislation, such as that covering trade union or political activities, social class, where a person lives or spent convictions.

While the Council is committed to meeting its duties under equality legislation, it also aims to follow the good practice set out in statutory codes of practice and guidance which accompany the legislation.

3. Aims of the Policy

In meeting the overall objective of the policy, a number of more detailed aims have been identified covering general aims, services and employment.

General Aims

The council aims:

- to provide community leadership on equality issues and to work with its partner organisations and the community to make the borough a place to live, work and visit free from discrimination and harassment;
- to incorporate equality principles from the start in all its policies, plans and strategies;
- to assess the equality impact of its policies, services and decisions, and to determine the needs of its employees, customers and citizens;
- to identify the equality and diversity outcomes it wants to achieve for its employees, customers and communities;
- to reflect the diversity of the borough in its publications, events and other marketing and communications activities;
- to follow the social model of disability;
- to apply the principles of this policy in its commissioning and procurement activities and in services commissioned through other organisations.

Service Provision Aims

The Council aims:

- to provide appropriate, accessible and effective services and facilities to all sections of the community without discrimination or prejudice;
- to provide clear information about our services in appropriate formats which meet people's needs;
- to monitor our services to ensure that all sections of the community are receiving fair access and outcomes and take action to address any inequalities that are apparent;
- to engage with people from different backgrounds in identifying needs and in decisions about services;
- to respond promptly and fairly to any complaints that we receive about our services or employees including those of discrimination.

Employment Aims

The Council aims:

- to ensure that its employment policies and procedures do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual on any unjustifiable grounds;
- to make the profile of its workforce at all levels as representative of the borough's population as possible;

- to monitor its employment processes by relevant protected characteristics and take action to address inequalities that are apparent;
- to promote a culture of fairness and respect in all its employment policies, procedures and practices;
- to provide appropriate training for employees on equality issues;
- to protect its employees from harassment and investigate all claims of harassment that are made;
- to respond appropriately to the particular needs of employees, including those relating to religion or culture.

4. Responsibility for the Policy

Responsibility for the policy rests with the council's cabinet. The cabinet will nominate an elected member with lead responsibility for equality and for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for effective implementation, monitoring and review of the policy.

All directors are responsible for implementing the policy within their directorates. The corporate board of directors will identify a lead director on equality who will act as a champion for promoting equality and chair meetings of the corporate equality and diversity leadership group.

All elected members and employees of the council have an individual responsibility to comply with the requirements of this policy in all dealings with elected members, employees, job applicants, residents, service users and other members of the public, and with other organisations.

5. Rights under the Policy

The policy assigns rights alongside responsibilities.

Any customer who feels that they have been unfairly treated is entitled to submit a complaint to the council which will be dealt with through the council's customer feedback procedure.

Job applicants who feel that they may have grounds for complaint should refer to the 'Fair Deal for Job Applicants' and contact the Assistant Director HR and Organisational Development.

Hate crime incidents can be reported to the police or the council's crime reduction officer with a portfolio for hate crime.

Employees who believe that they are suffering from harassment or bullying, or have other complaints related to this policy arising from their employment, can raise the matter through the council's grievance policy and procedure.

Any serious concerns that an employee may have arising from this policy about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of officers or members of the council, or others acting on behalf of the council, not covered by the above, can be reported under the confidential reporting policy.

The council will seek to protect individuals from any form of victimisation arising from their taking action in relation to their rights in law or making any complaint through the council's procedures arising from this policy.

6. Implementation of the Policy

All directors identify officers at a senior level to take a lead on implementing the policy within their directorates. These lead officers will meet on a regular basis as the corporate equality and diversity leadership group, with representation from relevant employee groups or outside bodies.

The council will publish an equality scheme or strategy to set out in more detail its approach to advancing equality and which will contain its overall equality objectives. It will be reviewed at least every three years. These equality objectives will be included in the council plan and monitored through the council's quarterly performance arrangements to the cabinet.

An annual review of equality and diversity will be drawn up each year to report on progress with advancing equality across the council which will be submitted to the cabinet.

All directorates will prepare annual equality and diversity action plans which will be linked with their annual strategic plans and respond to the contents of the equality scheme and the annual reviews. Progress in achieving the action plans will be reported in directorate annual reports. Action plans and annual reports will be circulated to a scrutiny committee. Action plans will be approved by the relevant cabinet member(s) for the services concerned.

Approved by the Cabinet
14th March 2012