



VALENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Public Sector Equality Duty Statement 2023



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Public bodies such as schools have a duty, under the 2010 Equality Act, to ensure they promote equality within their organisation and this statement sets out how we endeavour to achieve this at Valence Primary School. Of course, we consider this to be not just a legal duty but a moral one as well. A belief in the right of every single person to be treated with equal dignity and compassion alongside equal legal protection is fundamental to the ethos which underpins everything we do in school.

The Equality Act makes explicit our responsibility to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In this respect, a protected characteristic could be any one of a multitude of factors that are shared by particular groups of people, but will include characteristics such as race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. Central to a commitment to fulfil this responsibility is a recognition that all groups with protected characteristics fall within the compass of the human race as a whole, and who by definition therefore have equal status and equal rights.

We also seek to recognise that the way in which we treat people is linked to the way we treat the environment in which we live, and the other species who share the planet with us. We do not see compassion and consideration as finite resources, and the equal treatment of people can and should serve as an exemplar of our commitment to, and responsibility for, the wider world.

Objectives

Our equality objectives are based on the principles of human rights and human dignity, and can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure that the school retains a culture of advancing equality both in its policies and its practices.
- To develop the children's understanding of, and commitment to, the promotion of equality and the elimination of discriminatory practices and beliefs.
- To deepen an understanding among all children and staff of the strengths and needs of all protected characteristic groups.
- To continue to seek ways in which the culture, policies and practices within school can be further improved to advance equality and to eliminate discrimination.
- To celebrate the rich variety of individual and group characteristics which constitute our school community, as well as the wider world.

Principles into Practice

The following list covers some of the main ways in which we seek to implement our moral and legal responsibilities to ensure equality within school.

1. Whenever the Governing Body reviews policies in school, we will always take into account any relevant equal opportunity implications. The school's key policies are kept updated on our website, and all our policies are available by request at the school office.
2. We regularly analyse the progress and attainment of all children in the school, including the progress and attainment of specific pupil groups. Where we identify significant variations between the children who share a protected characteristic and children in the school generally, we then explore the reasons behind this.
3. All aspects of the curriculum are open to all children, and we will always make adaptations where necessary to accommodate the particular needs of a child or group of children.
4. We model the British values of respect and tolerance to all people, irrespective of characteristics, and we consider it our moral duty to promote and develop this understanding and good practice in the children themselves. In line with our teaching of the academic curriculum, we believe that education is by far the most effective response to incidents of intolerance or disrespect.
5. We promote a culture in which children feel comfortable sharing concerns and worries with adults in school. Although worries can affect all children, those in protected characteristic groups can face greater barriers than their peers do.
6. We also seek to promote a culture in the school that recognises the needs of staff members, whether this is in terms of emotional support, time off to attend family events or medical appointments, or requests for changes in working arrangements.
7. We also promote a culture in which parents feel comfortable to approach the school with concerns or difficulties, which again can sometimes be linked to their membership of a protected characteristic group. In addition to increasing parents' confidence in approaching the school with issues that may relate to protected characteristics, the strong relationships between staff and parents has helped to develop a culture where the strengths and needs of protected characteristic groups are understood, acknowledged and valued.
8. The school recognises world festivals and dates that are important for a range of protected characteristic groups which regularly feature as part of our assembly calendar. This supports our planning for key events in school, as well as raising our awareness of moments in the year that are important for children, staff and families across a wide range of protected characteristic groups.

Current equality objective: when creating a new policy and reviewing an existing policy, we answer these three questions:

1. Does this remove or reduce disadvantages suffered by pupils with particular protected characteristics?
2. Will this affect different groups of pupils differently? If 'yes' what will we do to make sure nobody is disadvantaged?
3. Is there any way we can encourage these groups of pupils to become more involved with the school or create opportunities for them that they wouldn't otherwise enjoy?