



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Our Vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity

At Richardson Dees Primary School we will treat everyone fairly; celebrating and meeting different needs so that all members of our school community are free to live, learn and achieve their potential.

We aim to:

- Maintain and promote a working partnership between the school, parents and community which fosters respect, honesty, truth, co-operation and tolerance.
- Help the children understand the world in which they live, have mutual respect for the values of others and work together as a team.
- To ensure that everyone, whatever their needs and capabilities, is included and catered for.
- To value each individual and recognise and respond to the needs of all children.

2. Defining Equality and Diversity

2.1 Equality

It is understood that Equality has taken place when there is a fair society in which everyone can participate and is given the opportunity to achieve. Equality is about eliminating discrimination and promoting fair and equal treatment for all. This means that employment opportunities and educational inclusion should be free from irrelevant barriers and accessible to all.

All organisations should be free of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the following list of nine 'protected characteristics' as identified by the Equality Act (2010):

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage / civil partnership
- pregnancy / maternity
- race
- religion and belief

- sex / gender
- sexual orientation

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

Under the general duty school must exercise 'due regard' in respect of the protected characteristics to:

1. Widen life chances, not restrict them
2. Foster talents, not suppress them
3. Ensure no child is disadvantaged or discriminated against
4. Create a better and more efficient working environment

2.2 Diversity

Diversity is about recognising and valuing differences between individuals, groups and communities to create a positive and inclusive culture for the benefit of the school. Diversity is also about promoting good relations between staff and the community to attract and retain talented individuals to reflect the social and ethnic mix of the local community. This will allow the school to deliver education and services that meet the needs of the local people.

By promoting diversity, we can meet different needs creatively to ensure opportunities are available to all and potential is fulfilled. Promoting a diversity friendly school culture, we are able to meet our school's aims and objectives more efficiently. Culture is about the way we behave towards one another – school governors, all employees in the school, parents, pupils and the whole school community. It is about how we treat one another and respect our differences. Promoting diversity and a diversity friendly culture helps to create a more productive school community.

3. Aims and Objectives

The school should seek to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. It is believed that when individuals are treated fairly; motivation increases, teaching and learning performance improves and a healthy and positive working environment can be maintained.

The school aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment for reasons relating to the list of protected characteristics as identified by the Equality Act 2010. (See section 2)

Staff within the school should have a duty to: -

- Comply with and promote the school ethos in relation to Equality & Diversity.
- Be aware of their behaviour and its impact on others
- Report suspected discriminatory actions
- Report suspicions of harassment taking place

- Maximise the development of each child and young person and ensure access to all aspects of the curriculum
- To adhere to all school policies and procedures in relation to equality and diversity.
- To enable staff to have equal access to personal and professional development courses.
- Ensure that individuals who have made, or been involved in, a complaint of harassment or discrimination, are not victimised against.
- Seek guidance on matters of equality and best practice when they are unsure of the appropriate course of action.

The school should ensure this is done by: -

- Not discriminating against any individual member of staff or pupil on the grounds of their gender, gender reassignment, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion & belief, age, pregnancy & maternity, or marriage & civil partnership.
- Ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school and that the taught curriculum reinforces the principle of equality.
- Removing any forms of indirect discrimination which may form barriers to learning.
- Ensuring that all recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development systems are fair and accessible to all.
- Challenging stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- Celebrating the cultural diversity of our community and showing respect for all minority groups.
- Respecting individual differences.
- Recognising and valuing the contribution of all staff and pupils.
- Providing positive educational experiences and support for all pupils to promote positive social attitudes.
- Acknowledging that every member of our school community is entitled to a learning environment that promotes dignity and respect for all.
- Not accept any forms of intimidation, bullying, harassment or victimisation.
- Providing positive action measures where appropriate and permissible by legislation.
- Providing appropriate in-service training for all staff to ensure they are aware of their role and responsibility in relation to the equality agenda.

4. Legislation

Legal Framework

The school has considered and incorporated the following legal framework in relation to Equality & Diversity;

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004
- Racial & Religious Hatred Act 2006
- The Part Time Workers Regulations 2000
- Gender Recognition Act 2004

The Equality Act 2010 replaced the following pieces of legislation;

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended in 2005)
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- The Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Discrimination

The school recognises that discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person. There are several ways in which discrimination can occur;

1. Direct Discrimination – When someone is treated less favourably than someone else because of a protected characteristic, e.g. their race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, religion & belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity.
2. Indirect Discrimination – When a provision, criterion or practice (PCP), which when applied to all, puts those having a particular protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, and that PCP is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, it can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular protected characteristic. In employment law this applies to Age, Race, Religion & Belief, Gender, Gender reassignment, Sexual Orientation and Marriage & Civil partnership.

3. **Associative Discrimination** – Associative discrimination is a form of direct discrimination which occurs against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. This applies to Race, Religion or belief, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability, Gender and Gender Reassignment.
4. **Discrimination by Perception** – Discrimination by perception is a form of direct discrimination which occurs against someone because the others think they possess a protected characteristic. This applies to Age, Race, Religion or belief, sexual orientation, Disability, Gender Reassignment and Gender.
5. **Victimisation** – This has a very specific meaning in discrimination law. It does not just mean singling some-one out. Victimisation makes it unlawful for one person to treat another less favourably than they would treat other people because that person has raised a complaint under discrimination legislation, or given evidence, or been involved in proceedings resulting from a complaint under discrimination legislation. For example, it can occur when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance. This applies to Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Race, Religion & Belief, Sexual Orientation, Marriage & civil partnership and Pregnancy & Maternity.
6. **Harassment** – Conduct which violates a person's dignity and creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment and may be intentional or unintentional. Harassment may occur as a result of persistent treatment or an isolated incident. Harassment can be related to a person's Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion & Belief and Sexual Orientation. The Equality Act 2010 also brought in changes to harassment legislation meaning that employees can now complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them. For example, a member of staff who does not have a protected characteristic is now able to claim harassment on the grounds that the actual harassment of another member of staff has led to an offensive environment to work in.
7. **Harassment by a third party** – This is where an employer can be potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don't employ. This applies to Gender, Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion & belief and Sexual Orientation.

The School also recognises that, in respect of its staff, unlawful discrimination can occur before or during the employment relationship, or even after it has ended. The school should not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment from employees, pupils or the public and should work to improve attitudes and actions.

5. Roles and Responsibilities for the Promotion of Equality

The Governing Body

The Governing Body should have responsibility for:

- Setting out its commitment to equal opportunities in the Single Equality Scheme and continuing to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

- Ensuring that no one is discriminated against when applying for jobs at its school on account of their Gender, Gender reassignment, Race, Sexual orientation, Religion & Belief, Age, Disability, Marriage & Civil Partnership and Pregnancy & maternity.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to disabled people.
- Reviewing the arrangements for disabled pupils on an annual basis
- Welcoming all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have, and make every effort to make reasonable adjustments to the premises, facilities, school services and curriculum in order to enable disabled pupils and staff to have access to the school's services and curriculum
- Ensuring that no child is discriminated against whilst in its school, on account of their Gender, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sexual Orientation, Religion & Belief, Pregnancy & Maternity and Disability. For example, all children should have access to the full range of the curriculum and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied reasonably and equally to boys and girls. When the school uniform affects a child's religion, then the School will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.
- Ensuring that the school's policies, procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's).
- Being involved in dealing with serious breaches of the Equality & Diversity policy in sub-committees, with awareness of the need for potential appeal.

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher should have responsibility for:

- Implementing the school's Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan within school
- Providing appropriate training for staff in equal opportunities and diversity and its implications for teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to Equality & Diversity.
- Ensuring that all staff appointment panels give due regard to this guidance in order that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, pay, performance management, promotion and training matters.
- Promoting the principles of Equal Opportunity and Diversity when developing the curriculum as well as promoting respect for other people in all aspects of the school's work, for example through assemblies, displays and the PSHE and RE Curriculum.
- Ensuring that due regard is given to the principles of Equality & Diversity with respect to all school policies.
- Encouraging staff to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

- Treating all reports of incidents of unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment and victimisation with due seriousness. (And seeking advice from Human Resources where relevant)
- Provide the governing body with appropriate data to enable them to monitor equality.
- Making the Governing Body aware of any serious incidents involving equality or diversity implications.

School Staff

All individuals should have responsibility for:

- Contributing to the school with achieving the objectives and actions contained in the school Single Equality Scheme.
- Adhering to the School's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- Ensuring that all staff, adults and pupils are treated fairly, equally and with dignity and respect.
- Not discriminating against any member of staff, adult or pupil.
- Taking care when selecting classroom materials, paying due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and not using resources that are discriminatory in any way. Staff should strive to provide materials that give positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenge stereotypical images of all minority groups.
- Taking care when designing long term planning, paying due regard to the use of this guidance to direct the choice of topic to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- Challenging any incidents of prejudice or discrimination and reporting to the Head Teacher or Governing Body as appropriate.

North Tyneside Council

North Tyneside Council (in partnership with Engie), via the HR Advisory service, (where schools buy into the HR Advisory SLA) will support the school with;

- Providing advice, guidance and support to the School, the Head Teacher and its Governing Body in relation to equality and diversity issues.
- Supporting the School in the implementation and review of its Single Equality Scheme
- Supporting the School in developing and reviewing its Equality Action plan.
- Supporting the school with the training and development of School staff in relation to Equality & Diversity.

6. Recruitment, Retention and Progression

The school should be committed to recruiting, retaining and progressing a diverse workforce by:

- Attracting applicants from all sections of the community.
- Advertising in a variety of publications, working with Job Centre Plus and other agencies to attract under-represented groups.
- Producing job descriptions and person specifications which are clearly related to duties.
- Using and accepting different formats such as large print, tape, disk or email for the recruitment process where available and appropriate.
- Making adjustments within the recruitment / assessment process where reasonable to accommodate specific needs and / or disabilities.
- Using appropriately trained staff to conduct interviews.
- Valuing life skills as part of the recruitment process. Competence gained through these experiences will be balanced against those gained through the normal route.
- Supporting all staff to achieve their potential through the School Appraisal process.
- Considering and pursuing reasonable adjustments to enable staff who are disabled or have a medical condition to enable them to remain in employment.
- Ensuring equal pay for equal value through the use of the agreed North Tyneside job evaluation process.
- Training and informing staff of issues and expected behaviours.
- Dealing effectively with incidents of discrimination.
- The School should understand that a workforce that broadly reflects the community it serves has a greater understanding and ability to respond to pupils' and parents' needs.

7. Bullying and Diversity incidents

Pupils

The School believes all pupils should feel both safe and valued, whatever characteristics they may have. Bullying and harassment of pupils, staff, parents, visitors by pupils on the basis of their identity (including a perceived characteristic, and by association with a protected characteristic) is unacceptable. Incidents will be logged, investigated and appropriate actions taken to prevent future incidents and to support the victim as outlined in the School's anti-bullying Policy.

Staff and Governors

The School views any form of discrimination undertaken by adults as serious acts of misconduct. Any such breaches could result in disciplinary action being taken and in the case of harassment, might call for police involvement.

7. Monitoring and Review

The School recognises that equality and diversity action and progress needs to be monitored and analysed. In order to do this the school will:

- Assess the impact of its policies, practices and procedures and where necessary set new targets. (See Equality Impact Assessment Template)
- Review the schools Equality and Diversity Policy, Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan in line with current legislation and any other improvements identified.
- Monitor the recruitment and selection process, to ensure that no individual applying for a post at the school is discriminated against.
- Monitor the school behaviour and exclusions policies, to ensure that pupils from minority groups are not disadvantaged as a result of the application of these procedures.
- Monitor the use of services to ensure that each and every section of the wider community has equal and fair access to services provided.
- Monitor the non-use of school services and take action if barriers to access school services exist. It is suggested that the school could do this through the use of pupil data, parent, staff and governor questionnaires and other similar systems.
- Undertake workforce profiling, including the monitoring of school workforce and pupil demographics. Where this indicates under representation of particular equality groups, advice should be sought from the School Link HR Advisor and action taken where possible to improve the imbalance using the provision for positive action that exists within equality legislation.
- Recognise that the needs of all children and young people, their parents and staff working within the school are the key to successful policy, procedure and practice. At all times the school should seek to ensure true representation of the community by ensuring information is available in alternative formats and languages and that meetings are held in accessible buildings and at suitable times.

8. Equality Planning

The school has developed a Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan to meet its objectives of fair treatment and equal representation within the workplace and in terms of education and service delivery. The school will integrate the actions arising from the Equality Action Plan into the school planning process so that all equality work is mainstreamed and recognised throughout the school as an essential element of delivering quality education, services and fair treatment. Development work will be undertaken to include equality actions into the school performance management system, allowing members of staff the opportunity to directly impact upon improvement in Equality and Diversity.

9. Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare

The School has a responsibility to provide a safe working environment for all employees. The school has published and promoted policies that support staff wellbeing. Example of policies which are designed to support staff include:

- Bullying and Harassment guidance
- Appraisal Policy & Procedure
- Capability Procedure
- Redundancy Policy & Procedure
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Attendance Management Policy
- Rarely Cover Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Group Dispute Policy & Procedure
- Dismissal Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

10. Complaints

The School takes seriously all complaints; where a complaint is related to equality / diversity issues, the school procedure for dealing with complaints will apply. This procedure will be made accessible through the school website or will be made available in an alternative format as requested.

Complaints should be made to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. Staff may wish to make themselves aware of the School Grievance procedure in the event that they wish to raise any concerns.

11. Single Equality Duty

There are statutory duties placed on schools in terms of equality legislation, the latest revision being the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises discrimination law and strengthens the law to support progress on equality.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) asks schools to have due regard to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization;
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- Foster good relations between different groups.

In order to meet the PSED, each school should have a Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. It is recommended that schools report on an annual basis on the outcome

of your equality monitoring, equality impact assessments (EIA's) and progress which the school has made in relation to their Equality Action Plan.

Schools need to collect the relevant information in order to meet the legal requirement to conduct equality analysis on employment policies and practices. Listed bodies, including Schools, are required to publish the details of any analysis which takes place and any information used in that analysis.

There is a requirement to publish the details of the Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) you have undertaken regarding policies and practices in your school. This is in order to demonstrate the following;

- Any analysis the school has been undertaken to establish whether policies and practices further the aims of the equality duty
- Any information the school has considered when undertaking that analysis
- Details of engagement the school has undertaken with interested parties concerning fulfilling the equality duty