

## **Coates Lane Primary School – Equalities Policy**

### **Background**

The requirements of the Equality Act have been introduced incrementally since October 2010. From April 2012 school has a specific duty to publish both information and objectives. The primary purpose of The Equality Act is to bring together existing equalities legislation. Primarily these are the Equal Pay Act (1970), The Race Relations Act (1976/2000), the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and builds upon the 2006 Equality Act. The 2010 Act imposes equality duties in respect of a number of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality. It brings all existing provisions broadly into line with one another and extends beyond race, gender and disability to now include characteristics such as marital status, pregnancy, having caring responsibilities or maternity. The definition of equality is therefore wider than it was before. Additionally, requirements that have in the past been seen as good practice are now enforceable by law. For example, the law now requires that, as part of their procurement processes, public bodies should prefer companies that it contracts with to have a positive record on equality matters.

All schools should review current policies in light of the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Schools' provision of the act prohibits schools from discriminating against, harassing or victimizing:

- Prospective pupils
- Pupils at school
- In some limited circumstances, former pupils

NOTE – Age and being married or in a civil partnership are NOT protected characteristics for the schools' provision. Schools have responsibilities as employers and ALL the protected characteristics need to be taken into account. It is THE GOVERNING BODY of Coates Lane Primary School that is liable for any breaches of the Equality Act.

This document provides policy and procedures that will ensure that school fulfils its obligations and is intended to replace the following Policies:

- Race Equality Policy and Action Plan
- Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan (including Accessibility Plan)

- Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy – including Sexual Orientation, Age, Religion or belief
- A strategy for promoting community relations

It is important that the policy protects the confidentiality of individuals and, whilst there is a statutory duty to share information about the policy, care must be taken when publishing data and statistics to ensure that information cannot be used to identify individuals.

## 1. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and Governors of Coates Lane Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school, this means not only treating everybody equally and having high aspirations for all, but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school. We seek to celebrate and value the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The Governing Body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. EVERY MEMBER of our school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At Coates Lane Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating people fairly, and creating a COMMUNITY where EVERYBODY has the opportunity to fulfil their potential – irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or ANY OTHER recognized area of discrimination.

The ‘strapline’ from our school Mission Statement is :

INSPIRING AND CHALLENGING EVERYBODY TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL, WITHIN A  
FUN AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY.

OFStEd have recognized our work in this areas and here are a couple of quotes to illustrate their feelings regarding our performance in this area:

“INSERT QUOTE FROM REPORT HERE”

## 2. SCHOOL CONTEXT

There are currently around 200 pupils on roll – with around 60% male dominance. With the exception of the Reception Class, all classes have more boys than girls and the difference is often marked (ie, 18 boys, 12 girls). We serve a community that is overwhelmingly White British Heritage (around 96%), but have some representation from families with a range of ethnic heritages. This is reflected in the fact that all pupils in school currently have English as a first language. On entry, the profile of our pupils is that they begin school with skills below those that might be expected for their age, although there is a broad mix in most cohorts, with some pupils achieving at a level above that which could be expected. We have a number of pupils with known disabilities – as documented on the SEN register and we also have representation on

Governing Body from people who have disabilities. School is physically accessible and the accessibility plan was drawn up by a team involving parents and governors with disabilities. Actions outlined in these plans have all taken place. Children in Care are well looked after in school and (whilst the 'group' is too small to have meaningful data analysis) make good progress. Carers are welcomed into school and we have an open relationship with all groups of parents and carers. Our engagement with parents and carers has been graded as 'OUTSTANDING' by OFStEd.

*Pupils and parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive and have been actively engaged in developments to provide a topic-based curriculum that extends meaningful links between subjects and offers pupils a broader range of experiences.*

### 3. ETHOS AND ATMOSPHERE

- At Coates Lane Primary School, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There is an openness of atmosphere which welcomes EVERYONE into the school
- Everybody within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour.
- All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect
- Displays around school are of a high standard, reflecting diversity across all areas of equality of opportunity and are regularly monitored
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

Our work in this area has been graded as Good/Outstanding by OFStEd.

*Central to the ethos of this welcoming and vibrant school are the very caring relationships that ensure good support and pupils' good achievement. There are genuine strengths demonstrated in pupils' achievement in the creative arts and this contributes to a very stimulating school environment. Indeed, the quality of display of pupils' work in classrooms and on corridors is highly impressive. The school leadership effectively promotes community cohesion, with the school and local community working harmoniously together. The strong links with a school in Ethiopia and visits and visitors help pupils appreciate diversity beyond their own immediate community.*

### 4. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy applies to the whole of the school community. Therefore, its draft form was published and brought to the attention of the whole school community via the School Newsletter, Facebook, Twitter and the School Website as part of a consultation exercise. Views were invited and amendments made to the policy as a result of stakeholder feedback. At that point, the Policy was brought to Governors for approval.

### 5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Coates Lane is a fully inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use an inspiring curriculum and a range of teaching strategies to enhance

the self-esteem of all those that we serve and to provide a learning environment in which every individual is encouraged to reach their potential.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils, including:

- Academic performance of a wide range of groups, such as FSM, Boys, Girls, CLA, ethnic minorities, children with SEND.
- Attendance data for all named groups
- Exclusions
- Bullying/behaviour records
- Racist incidents
- Use of homophobic language

All of these are in addition to the regular and detailed assessments that are made of pupils' learning and we use all available information to track the progress of all pupils as they move through the school. As part of this, we monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, intervening where necessary to ensure that no pupil gets left behind. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and Local Authority data, to ensure that pupils are making the maximum levels of progress when compared to all schools, and also when compared to schools in similar circumstances. In addition to pupil performance, we also regularly monitor a range of other information, which relates to Attendance, Exclusions, Racist incidents, bullying, sexism, homophobia and ALL forms of bullying, parental involvement in school and participation in Extended Learning Opportunities.

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and to provide specific support to children both academically (intervention and support) and socially (through our nurture group). This allows us to accelerate the progress of all pupils through providing the necessary support to secure improvement.

Coates Lane Primary School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimization. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce who share our aims and vision and to establish a workforce that is representative of all sections of our community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population. When recruiting staff, we collect data in terms of race, disability and gender.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Improvement Plan. The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan is the Headteacher. Their role is to:

- Lead discussions, organize training, update staff, facilitate and support discussions
- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

## 6. DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE

### Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide every pupil with the opportunity to success, and to aim for – and reach – the highest possible level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a culturally and socially diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping (and challenging stereotypes as the need arises)
- Use materials that present a positive image of, and attitudes towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to value their own culture and religions, whilst celebrating the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions (using first-hand experience wherever possible)
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity
- All subject leaders (where appropriate) to promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and visitors (extended learning opportunities) that involve all pupil groups
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging, yet realistic, targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify training and resources that support staff development

### Learning Environment

In our school, there is a consistently high expectation of all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or ANY OTHER recognized form of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure their achievements against the achievements of others. Parents are also encouraged to recognize progress and achievement in the same light.

- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving high levels of motivation and consequently good progress from all pupils

- Adults in the school provide positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- School places a very high priority on the provision for Special Educational Needs and disability. We will meet ALL pupils learning needs through carefully planned programmes of work based upon assessment of prior learning
- School provides an environment in which pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- A range of teaching methods are used to ensure that effective teaching takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

### Curriculum

At Coates Lane Primary School, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning in all year groups reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas, and through a wide range of cross-curricular themes that promote positive attitudes towards equality and diversity.
- Pupils are able to explore a wide range of concepts and issues pertaining to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All pupils are able to access assessments which recognize progress and achievement, which promote progression.
- Through a range of embedded processes, pupils will learn about and value diversity, on a local, national and global level

### Resources and Materials

The provision of resources and materials within Coates Lane Primary School is of a high priority. When planning purchases, staff should take into account whether or not the resources being bought reflect equality. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community

### Language

We recognize that it is important at Coates Lane Primary School that ALL members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or reinforce stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem
- Uses accurate language in reference to particular groups or individuals; provides challenges in instances where this is not the case.

### Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of the school to provide equal access to all activities from the earliest age. We undertake responsibility for making significant contributions to extended learning opportunities and are aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. Whilst the majority of Extended Learning Opportunities are provided by the school, those that are not are provided by those who are aware of the school's commitment and they will receive written guidelines. It is expected that all such non-staff members will adhere to these.

### Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake at Coates Lane Primary School to make appropriate provision for all EAL/Bi-lingual pupils to ensure full access to the curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Romany and Traveller children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners

### Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or ANY OTHER recognised area of discrimination in addition to the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Romany and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed upon them due to disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that SOME disabilities may impose SOME practical boundaries to SOME career aspirations)
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognize that perpetrators may also be victims and require support

- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed firmly on the VALUE that diversity brings, rather than the CHALLENGES.

### Staffing and Staff Development

We recognize the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility amongst staff. This should include:

- Pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff across key stages where possible.
- We actively promote and encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds

### Staff Recruitment

- Those involved in recruitment and selection are trained, aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and offer equality of opportunity, through good practice through the selection and recruitment process
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in staff induction
- Temporary staff (including Supply Teachers) are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

### Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the wider community

We will work closely with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- ALL parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in with school activities – school reaches out to the community to participate in a wide range of activities within the community.
- We will explore the possibility of establishing a strong 'parent voice' which is separate to Governance and represents stakeholders representing all sections of the community. This will be developed to support the school with matters relating to its equality duties.

## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Our governing body will ensure that school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.

- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.
- The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this policy
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- All members of the school community to have a responsibility to treat each other and staff with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality.

#### 8. COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT

Coates Lane Primary School will take steps to ensure that we buy services from organizations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant deciding factor in any tendering process.

#### 9. THE MEASUREMENT AND IMPACT OF THE POLICY

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at appropriate times within a set timescale.

#### 10. PUBLICISING THE POLICY AND PLAN

- The Policy is a public document which will be made available via a number of avenues; namely the school website and links posted from our 'Twitter' and 'Facebook' pages. We will also post this information onto our School Newsletter so that all members of the community are aware that the document exists and are able to access it easily.

#### 11. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROGRESS

It is our intention to publish an annual report with regard to our performance and progress in respect of this policy, which will cover ethnicity, disability and gender. We also will report annually on the progress made in terms of improving access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information. Taking this single equality approaches, we will incorporate all requirements into a single annual report which meets the requirements of new legislation. This report will also formulate the basis of the annual action plan. The policy will have a life span of three years and will be reviewed within this framework.

#### 12. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Undertaking equality impact assessments (EIAs) is similar to undertaking health and safety risk assessments. This involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, function or strategy may be on a wide range of people.

EIAs are now required for disability, gender and race. Best practice would indicate that consideration should be given to age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation as part of this process.

EIAs are a way in which we can analyse our work to ensure that it meets the needs of all our service users and that no group is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.