

Bealings School

Equality Policy



Last updated Spring 2021

To be approved by Governors March 10th 2021

Signed copy held in school office

To be reviewed Spring 2022

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1 Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, by assessing impact and removing disadvantage
- Advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics by taking steps to meet the differing needs of different people
- Foster good relations between people with and without protected characteristics by encouraging participation

This document sets out how pupils, employees and visitors with the following protected characteristics will be protected in our school from harassment and/ or discrimination:

- age (not applicable to pupil cohorts)
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage (not applicable to pupil cohorts)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

This document also extends to cover all aspects of vulnerability, including those associated with socio-economic factors where known (e.g. pupils qualifying for free school meals).

Bealings is committed to being a good employer and this policy outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices.

We seek to be fully inclusive of all those in our community, including parents, guardians and carers.

2 Our Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations outlined later in this policy, school is guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: all members of the school and wider community are of equal value

We see all members of the school and wider community of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or socio-economic circumstances;
- Whichever their gender identity, sexual orientation or marital status;
- Whatever their age.

Principle 2: we recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated as appropriate, to take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face in relation to their protected characteristics.

Principle 3: we foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, socio-economic circumstances, or sexual orientation and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual harassment;
- Positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships.

Principle 4: We will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our school's vision and values.

All school's policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees. For example, in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or socio-economic circumstance;

- Whichever their gender identity and sexual orientation;
- Whatever their age.

Principle 5: we aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between those with and without the nine protected characteristics.

Principle 6: we consult widely.

We recognise that people affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. Wherever possible and/or deemed appropriate we will strive to involve the whole of our community when designing and reviewing relevant policies.

Principle 7: pupils, their families, staff and the wider community as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our school policies and core/ enhanced curriculum activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life. Our policies seek to respect and include those with and without protected characteristics.

Since September 2007 all schools have had a duty to contribute to ‘working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the work place, in schools and in the wider community’ (Ref: Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion, Department for Children, Schools & Families, 2007).

Bealings make our contribution to community cohesion by creating opportunities, through the curriculum and activities, where pupils can interact with those from different backgrounds and cultures. This enriches their understanding of the community and its diversity.

3 Aims of our Equality Policy

To articulate the school’s commitment to equality which permeates and is supported by all school policies, protocols, procedures and practices;

- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or comes into contact with, our school community is valued, respected and their individual needs are supported;

- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- To ensure all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential;
- To promote and support the continued professional development of all staff;
- To comply with statutory duties under equalities legislation in one single document.

4 The Purpose of the Equality Policy

This equality policy is the school's response to the specific and general duties detailed in current equality legislation, which has been brought together under the Equality Act 2010 (see appendix 1). It is an attempt to capture how our school is systematically establishing, implementing and embedding good practice in equality and diversity across all areas of school life. This includes a response to all aspects of diverse social identity.

This Single Equality Policy sets out how the school will:

- Eliminate discrimination (see appendix 2);
- Eliminate harassment or victimisation related to any aspect of social identity or diversity;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote positive attitudes to all aspects of social identity and diversity;
- Encourage participation by disabled people and people representing different aspects of social identity in public life;
- Take steps to take account of difference even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others;
- Take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils. This includes progress reviews of pupils by groups as identified in data monitoring sets.
- Planning to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity

5. Planning

This policy is underpinned by the core belief that all children and young people are a key part of their local community, share the same rights to membership of that community and are entitled to a high-quality education. Equality Objectives complement this Equality Policy which identify the key priorities to make our school more accessible to the whole community, irrespective of background or need.

It encompasses our duties to promote positive outcomes in relation to the nine protected characteristics. It encompasses our anticipatory duties to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments (reasonable and proportionate steps to overcome barriers that may impede some pupils or employees) we need to make to be best

placed to help pupils and staff with a disability and/or complex health need who come to our school.

Our action plan replaces the school's Disability Accessibility Plan (previously required under the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act) as it sets out that Bealings will ensure access to education for disabled / SEN pupils, alongside other protected groups, in the three areas required:

- Maximise the extent to which disabled / SEN pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Monitor the environment of the school to ensure disabled / SEN pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Ensure delivery to disabled / SEN pupils is appropriate and equitable to those pupils who are not disabled nor have SEN requirements.

Aspects of equality are reviewed within the standard pupil progress monitoring measures and as such will be regularly reported to governors. Equality objectives will also be identified through consultation with key stakeholders and reviewed every 4 years.

School staff contribute to the development of this action plan to ensure they are aware of targets, can implement and embed best practice. The policy and objectives are available on the school's website. It can also be made available on request to the school's office manager. We recognise the importance of engaging the whole school community and where language presents difficulties in accessing or understanding either document, school will endeavour to assist.

6 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

6.1 Ethos and Organisation

Bealings will ensure that the principles previously listed above also apply to the full range of our school policies, procedures and practices including those that are concerned with:

- Learners' progress, attainment and assessment;
- Learners' and staff personal development, welfare and well-being;
- Teaching styles and strategies (including Mantle of the Expert work);
- Admissions and attendance;
- Staff and governor recruitment, retention and professional development;

- Care, guidance and support;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community;
- Participation of groups in wider school activities;
- Preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society.

6.2 Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will ensure the following:

- The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender, disability and socio-economic background. We will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will use this contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- We will take into account the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- We will ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- We will use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability without stereotyping;
- We will promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- We will provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- We will actively seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- We will encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact of such subjects on learning;
- We will include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

6.3 The Curriculum

We will actively seek opportunities to review the curriculum (including the enhanced curriculum) and curriculum subject / areas in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles outlined above.

6.4 Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. When deemed necessary the decision to exclude a pupil will always be based on the agreed strategy within school's Behaviour and Inclusion policies. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

6.5 Equal Opportunities for Staff

Bealings is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. Whilst we try to ensure that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community, all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

6.6 Employer duties

As an employer we recognise the need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff, allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention (including bullying and harassment of staff);
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

7. Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-related bullying

School is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling legal duties for all aspects of equality such as:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs;

- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

Staff are aware of how to report and record prejudice-related incidences. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with in line with existing legal requirements.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Duncan Bathgate and Kelly McLoughlin (Co-Head Teachers) will:

- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and parents are aware of the Equality Policy and that there is a collective responsibility to apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
 - Ensure that the policy is implemented effectively (supported by the Governing Body);
 - Manage any day to day issues arising from the policy, whether for pupils or for the school as an employer, and treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness. Any action taken will be guided by the strategic policy ratified by school's Governing Body;
 - Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy;
 - Liaise with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available;
 - Monitor and report to the Governing Body annually on the effectiveness of the policy;
 - Provide appropriate support and monitoring for all pupils and specifically target pupils to whom the policy/action plan has a more direct relevance;
 - Ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy to ensure there is no discrimination in employment or training opportunities;
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum; promote respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

8.2 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability. They will:

- Ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- Recommend all governors receive up to date training in all the equalities duties;

- Designate a governor with specific responsibility for Equality;
- Establish that the equality objectives arising from this policy are part of the School Development Plan;
- Support the Head Teacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- Inform and consult with parents about the scheme;
- Conduct a review of the policy;
- Conduct on-going evaluation of the equality objectives;
- Seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for employment on grounds detailed in the nine protected characteristics;
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, guardians and pupils;
- Welcome all applications for admission to school, whatever a pupil's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability;
- Ensure that no pupil is discriminated against on account of their race, gender or disability.

8.3 All School Staff will:

- Accept that this is a whole school issue and support the implementation of the policy and equality objectives;
- Be aware of this policy and action plan and how it relates to them;
- Make known any queries or training requirements;
- Know how to deal with incidents of concern, and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Know procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination. They will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Co-Head Teachers;
- Qualified teachers will support teaching assistants / support staff working in their classrooms and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents;
- Not discriminate on racial, disability or other grounds;
- Keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation and attend training and information events organised by Bealings, school partnerships or the local authority
- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy and Objectives;

- Ensure that pupils from all groups are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum;
- Will strive to provide material that gives positive images and challenges stereotypes;
- Promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relations with pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community;
- Monitor and, where necessary, guide the practice of volunteers, visitors or contractors working in school. Any concerns should be reported to Duncan Bathgate or Kelly McLoughlin (Co- Head Teachers).

8.5 Pupils will:

- Be made aware of any relevant part of the policy, appropriate to age and ability;
- Be expected to act in accordance with any relevant part of the policy;
- Experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society;
- Understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents;
- Ensure any peer support programme within the school promotes understanding and supports pupils who are experiencing discrimination.

8.6 Parents, Guardians & Carers will:

- Have access to the policy;
- Be encouraged to support the policy;
- Have the opportunity to attend any relevant meetings/awareness raising sessions related to the policy;
- Have the right to be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child.
- All visitors, volunteers and contractors are responsible for complying with the school's Equality Policy – non-compliance will be dealt with in the first instance by Duncan Bathgate or Kelly McLoughlin (Co-Head Teachers).

9 Equality Objectives

The identified equality objectives for Bealings and that accompany this policy can be found on the school website.

10 Links to policies

SEND Policy

<http://www.bealings.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SEND-Policy-Autumn-2020.pdf>

Behaviour Policy

<http://www.bealings.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Behaviour-Policy-Autumn-2020.pdf>

Adult Behaviour Policy

<http://www.bealings.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Adult-Behaviour-Policy.pdf>