

Richard Whittington Primary School

EQUALITY POLICY



Richard Whittington Primary School TEAM Together Everyone Achieves More	<h1>EQUALITY POLICY</h1>	Policy Number 60 Version 1
		Issue date October 2015

Rationale

“Richard Whittington Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment”.

This single policy replaces separate policies the school had on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It reflects the legal duties set out in the **Equality Act 2010** and **non statutory guidance** set out by the government in December 2011 and March 2012. (See Appendix One for Legal Framework and key definitions) This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way. Our Single Equality Policy is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by:

- Active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but also in its review and implementation
- Proactive leadership
- Prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
Removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers.

Aims

Equality and Diversity is about making a difference to the lives of the people in the school community, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual. We are committed to ensuring that we meet the varied and individual needs of our children in our school, that our employment practices are fair and promote equality and that we respect the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, locally and nationally.

We aim to prepare children for living within a diverse society with increasing global connections and controversial issues.

We work hard to build strong and trusting relationships with our pupils and their families in order to harness their engagement and enjoyment in all aspects of school life. We recognise that pupils and family members may experience a range of different needs during different times in their lives and we endeavour to meet these needs by working in close partnership with relevant agencies.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

Our Ethos

Richard Whittington Primary School and Nursery is a welcoming and caring community of children, parents, staff and governors. Together we continually

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strive to provide a happy and supportive environment in which the unique potential in every child is realised. Our vision is that within a creative curriculum we will enable each child to share the responsibility for becoming independent and confident learners, and achievers in a continually changing world.

Guiding Principles

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, ethnicity or national identity, religious background, gender or cultural identity.

Principle 2: Relevant differences are recognised

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability – so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity – so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender – so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging

Policies and programmes 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 or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

Steps are taken to positively promote equality and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status

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- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: Reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

Principle 6: Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement

People affected by a policy or programme are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Such consultation is both direct and through representative organisations, and is based on principles of transparency and accountability. It involves those who in the past have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who continue to face barriers:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, and girls and boys
- Gay people as well as straight

Principle 7: Society as a whole benefits

Policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life for

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- Gay people as well as straight

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published in relation to:

- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender

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We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an Action Plan within the framework of the overall School Improvement Plan and processes of Self-Evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. (See Appendix Two) These objectives take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We regularly review our equality objectives and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

School Context (September 2015)

Richard Whittington Primary school is situated in the Thorley area of Bishop's Stortford. We admit pupils from the surrounding area. Children enter the school with abilities broadly in line those expected nationally and increasingly they make good progress throughout the school. The school benefits from good parental support and has sound links with the community. The number of children eligible for free school meals is low when compared to the national average. The school was originally built for an intake of 30 pupils per year group and subsequently expanded the yearly intake to 45. Additional premises were built to accommodate this expansion. From Years 1 to 6 children are taught in mixed year group classes.

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Most of our children are from White-British and White-other backgrounds with small proportions of children from a range of minority ethnic heritages. Characteristic	Total	Breakdown (number and %)
Number of pupils		
Number of staff		
Number of governors		
Religious character	None	
Mobility of school population -Stability		
Pupils eligible for FSM		
Deprivation factor		
Disabled staff		
Disabled pupils (SEND)		
Disabled pupils (no SEN)		
Pupils on SEN support		
Pupils with statement		
BME pupils		
BME staff		
Pupils who speak English as an additional language		
Average attendance		
Significant partnerships		
Awards, accreditations, specialist status		

Viewed by the
School Improvement Committee

Signed Chairman

Noted by the Governing Body

Signed Chairman of Governors

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APPENDIX ONE

Definitions

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. It is a defence against a claim of indirect discrimination if it can be shown to be “a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. This means both that the reason for the rule or practice is legitimate, and that it could not reasonably be achieved in a different way which did not discriminate.

Harassment is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.

Definition of parents

A parent is a wide reference (as in education law generally) not only to a pupil’s birth parents but to adoptive, step and foster parents, or other persons who have parental responsibility for, or who have care of, a pupil.

‘Protected Characteristics’ in the Equality Act 2010

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race / Ethnicity
- Religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Key definitions:

Age - people of all ages

Disability - a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

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Gender reassignment - a transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected

Race / Ethnicity - this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, including refugees and migrants; and Gypsies and Travellers

Religion or belief - religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

Sex - men/boys and women/girls are covered under the Act 13

Sexual orientation - the Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

Marriage and civil partnership - only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination

Pregnancy and maternity - protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled

Other relevant groups e.g.:

Carers, people experiencing domestic violence, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children etc.

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