

Blackwood Primary School



Equality Policy

Mission Statement

United we empower, nurture and challenge.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Blackwood Primary School is a popular community school serving a residential area within Caerphilly County Borough Council. Most pupils come from homes which are either relatively advantaged or neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. A small number come from homes which are economically disadvantaged. Approximately 22.4% of

pupils claim free school meals. Most of the children admitted into school are of average to above average ability. Currently 8 pupils have statements of educational need and one child has an individual development plan for medical needs. 15.6% of pupils are on the SEN register.

Approximately 8 % of pupils come from an ethnic minority background and approximately 7% speak English as an additional language. These proportions are above the national average. Pupils are accommodated within a range of buildings, some of which pose challenges in catering for pupils and adults with mobility difficulties. Currently we have 5 pupils with physical and medical needs, these needs are supported within the school on an individual basis. Everyone at school values and encourages involvement of people from all sections of the local community. Through this involvement we aim to provide positive images which challenge stereotypical thinking. Both staff and governors are committed to working towards equality, regardless of race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation or disability. Together we strive to create an inclusive culture in which every individual, regardless of ability and background, is enabled to participate and is valued as a member of the school community. We therefore promote positive approaches to difference and foster respect for people of all cultural backgrounds. Pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds with the largest ethnic groups being Indian closely followed by Pakistani. Other ethnic backgrounds include Polish, Filipino, Romanian, Lithuanian, Chinese and other, Spanish, Pakistani and Other, White European, Portuguese, White and Black African, White and Black Caribbean, Asian and Chinese and White and Chinese. The different faiths represented in the school are Christianity, Judaism and Muslim. In September 2018 number of pupils who spoke English as an additional language were:

Language	Number	Language	Number	Language	Number
Chinese + Other	5	Filipino	1	Polish	9
Spanish	1	White + Asian	3	Romanian	4
Lithuanian	1	Pakistani +other	1	White European	3
Portuguese	1	White + Black African	1	White + Black Caribbean	1
Asian + Chinese	1	White Chinese	1		

There is 2 members of staff that are fluent Welsh-speakers. In addition:

- 1 members of staff speak fluent Greek
- 1 member of staff speaks fluent French.
- The remainder of staff are first language English-speaking.

Most staff at school are female, only 12% are male. The school values equally all these people, with their different beliefs and non-beliefs, cultures and languages. AIMS The aims of this policy are to:

- ★ promote good relationships amongst pupils, staff, parents and the wider community.

- ★ promote positive attitudes towards different racial groups and to disabled people.
- ★ promote equality of opportunity for all.
- ★ eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, language, religion, disability or sexual orientations.
- ★ allow for more favourable treatment for disabled people.

These aims reflect the General Duties required by the Equality Act 2010.

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and fairness in all areas of school life and to valuing the diversity of our colleagues, pupils and people living within our local communities. It is this commitment which lies at the heart of our aim of providing an environment that is committed to including and encouraging all pupils, parent and colleagues to reach their full potential regardless of disability, race, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, social or educational background or family/care responsibilities. We are also determined to create a school environment which supports our vision and values and which is free from any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying and within which all individuals are treated with respect, fairness and courtesy. Any discriminatory behaviour, including harassment or bullying by individuals or groups, will be taken extremely seriously and will be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion or dismissal. The school takes its responsibility to monitor and report on discriminatory incidents each term seriously and uses this information to plan strategies to combat such incidents. We share

information about racist incidents with the LA to help shape actions to combat hate crimes across the city

We recognise and celebrate the fact that British and Welsh society is made up of people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. It is important that all pupils are prepared to live in such a society.

STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

The chosen Strategic Equality Objectives are to:

1. Reduce Gaps in attainment and attendance between pupils from protected groups
2. Further develop the quality and use of our Equality Monitoring and Data Collection
3. Teach and train our pupils, staff and governors about the principles and practice of equality, diversity and anti-discrimination

The strategically planned tasks within the Strategic Equality Plan enable the school to meet these objectives. They cover all relevant protected characteristics. They describe how the school is taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The policy applies to all full time, part time, job shares, permanent, temporary and supply staff. It applies to all pupils, parents, service users and visitors to the school in line with Equality legislation and the school's legal responsibilities to promote equality in employment, education and access to services..

Governors accept the following definitions of discrimination:

o Under the law, there are different categories of discrimination, with differences in the legal framework surrounding them.

o “Direct discrimination” happens when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination is generally unlawful. However, it may be lawful in the following circumstances:

- where there is an ‘occupational requirement’ for a job holder to be of a particular age;
- where a disabled person is treated more favourably than a non-disabled person;
- where the 2010 Act provides an express exception which permits directly discriminatory treatment that would otherwise be unlawful.

o Discrimination by association” is a form of direct discrimination that occurs if a school treats a person less favourably because of that person’s association with another person who has a protective characteristic

o “Discrimination by perception” is another form of direct discrimination against a person who is wrongly thought to have a particular relevant characteristic, or is treated as if they do have that characteristic.

o “Indirect discrimination” occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has the effect, or would have the effect, of placing members of one or more protected groups at a substantial disadvantage as a result. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. An example might be a physical strength test, which could discriminate against women in relation to a job that involves teaching, but might be justified in relation to a non-

teaching job that involves substantial heavy lifting. The relevant protected characteristics that may give rise to a claim of indirect discrimination are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

- o “Combined discrimination” takes place when a person is treated less favourably because of a combination of two of the specified relevant characteristics. Those protected characteristics that will be relevant for the purposes of this form of discrimination are age; disability; sex; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; race; and religion or belief.

- o “Discrimination arising from disability” this occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably not because of the person’s disability but because of something arising from, or in consequence of, the person’s disability such as the need to take a period of disability related absence.

- o “Victimisation” is the practice of treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination, for example by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague. Victimisation is also unlawful.

- o “Harassment” is any unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief, sex; and sexual orientation Harassment is also unlawful in some of the situations covered by discrimination law.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JOB APPLICANTS OR EXISTING MEMBERS OF STAFF

The governing body does not discriminate against an applicant for a post, or against an existing member of staff, on grounds of the protected characteristics. However, unlike other discrimination strands, direct age discrimination will not be unlawful if it can be shown to be objectively justified. In relation to disability but no other strand, there is an obligation to make reasonable adjustments in order to remove the substantial disadvantage created by the disability.

EQUALITIES SUMMARY STATEMENT

Blackwood Primary School aims to provide a happy, caring environment in which all children can feel confident and able to learn and an environment of mutual respect and support between all staff, pupils, parents and carers and the wider community. The school is committed to working towards race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation, language and disability equality, and to the creation of an inclusive culture in which every individual, regardless of ability, background or social circumstances, is enabled to participate and is valued as a member of the school community. The school promotes positive approaches to difference and fosters respect for people of all cultural backgrounds.

Stereotypical ways of thinking are the result of ignorance and may result in low self-esteem and limited aspirations. The school values and encourages involvement of people from all sections of the local community, and through this involvement aims to provide positive images, which challenge stereotyped thinking.

The school is committed to eliminating any unlawful discrimination on grounds of Race, Gender, Transgender, Religion or Belief, Disability or Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy or Maternity Marriage or Civil Partnership by creating an environment where every individual, regardless of ability or background, is able to participate and is valued fully as a member of the school community. Being opposed to all forms of discrimination and prejudice the school promotes a positive attitude towards differences and expects respect for people of all backgrounds. This is reflected in whole school aims and rules.

Any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-disabled or potentially damaging to any group will not be tolerated and will be challenged and monitored. Information derived from monitoring will be used to plan whole-school strategies to combat incidents. Information on identity based incidents and bullying will be shared regularly with the LA to help actions to combat hate crime across the County.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

We will support and encourage our colleagues in their responsibility to implement this policy by providing training, written information and guidance, including expert guidance and advice, where appropriate. Our progress and successes are regularly monitored and reported to the Board of Governors internally and, where appropriate, externally.

The Governing body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with the updated equality legislation
- The equality policy and procedures are followed

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Equality Policy is readily available, along with all other policies relating to various aspects of equality
- Governors, staff, pupils, parents and guardians are aware of the contents of such policies
- This policy and its procedures are followed
- Staff and governors have information about how the policy is working, and providing training for them on the policy if necessary
- All staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- Appropriate action is taken in cases of harassment and discrimination

All Staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist incidents, other incidents of harassment and all types of bullying
- Recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and good relations between all groups
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and equality

All members of staff have a duty to ensure that the policy is implemented.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to everyone working at Blackwood Primary School including employees, partners, temporary or agency workers, trainees,

work experience students, visitors and parent helpers as well as potential new employees and recruitment candidates.

INFORMATION GATHERING AND ENGAGEMENT

The collection of information is crucial in supporting the school in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps the school to review performance, so it needs to be detailed enough to enable measurement of how the school is delivering on equality duties. The information also helps accurate impact assessments and identify of which of the school's aims have been achieved and what the school needs to do better. Engagement is based on the information gained about representation of different groups. It is important to understand the full range of needs of the school community. At Blackwood Primary School pupils are asked their views through Pupil Voice groups and throughout the curriculum. In addition, informal discussions take place at lunchtimes and break. Parents express their views through discussion and dialogue with staff and various parent questionnaires. Parents are given opportunities to discuss a wide range of issues during parental engagement events and parents meetings. The school also operates an open door policy. These approaches are successful in gaining information and views on a wide variety of aspects in the school. The Headteacher operates an 'open door' policy

PUBLICATION AND REPORTING

The Strategic Equality Plan is communicated to stakeholders. It is available in large print and other formats on request. The school prospectus includes a reference to the Strategic Equality Plan and the values underpinning it. The school will report and publish annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the Plan itself on school ethos and practice within the school. This is undertaken as part of the Governors' Annual Report.

MONITOR AND REVIEW

The school will revisit and analyse the information and data used to identify priorities for the Strategic Equality Plan (e.g. achievement data, engagement with stakeholders). The school will use Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively. Based on the above, the plan will be reviewed annually and republished as necessary, but not less than annually with a full review not less than four yearly.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Any breaches of the Policy will be regarded as extremely serious and will result in action being taken against the perpetrator, under the appropriate disciplinary procedure. Any breach by a Contractor or service provider will result in appropriate action being taken under the terms of the relevant contract.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If anyone in the school feels that this Policy is not being followed then they should raise the matter with the Headteacher who will facilitate the appropriate action, which may include an investigation and report on the

issue. If there is a formal complaint, then the school's complaints procedure will be used.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

The Equalities Policy is available on request to parents, visitors and members of the wider community. It is also published on the school website. The Equalities Policy will be brought to the attention of all non-LA contractors or service providers.

THE EQUALITIES AND ACTION PLAN IS:

- included in the school improvement plan
- communicated to all staff
- published on the school's website

Both the policy and the action plan will be monitored regularly and evaluated on an annual basis by the Headteacher in line with the School's Improvement Plan. As a school we are fully committed to inclusive practice. To this end, we will continue to engage and consult with our whole school community on issues relating to further developing our practice. We welcome input and feedback from all stakeholders of the school relating to this policy. The feedback from the questionnaires currently being distributed to pupils, staff, parents and all other users of the school premises will assist the school in fulfilling its duties and improving its inclusive practice in relation to the Equalities Act 2010.