

Equality Policy May 2018

Purley Oaks Primary School is committed to promoting equality providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion where people feel able to participate fully in school life.

Statement of Intent

We are committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. The School recognises the value of an inclusive workforce. The Governing Board and senior leaders of the school will operate at all times within the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in its staffing decisions. All decisions, including advertising of vacancies, shortlisting, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of school requirements. The only personal characteristics, which will be taken into account, will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of the work involved. There will be no generalised concepts or assumptions about the characteristics of groups.

All staff will have a right to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. Any member of staff who deliberately and knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.

Statutory Requirements

The School is bound by law not to discriminate on certain grounds. The Equality Act 2010 has brought together current discrimination laws into one and sets out the "protected characteristics" of discrimination as: -

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex and
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economics

There are some exemptions from this legislation in situations where the essential nature of a job calls for a man, woman, or a person from a particular religion or racial group. The School will not normally seek to use exemptions from the above Acts. The School will give sympathetic consideration to requests for time off or for religious observance from staff who are active members of particular religions or beliefs.

The School will wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties created by applicants or members of staff who have a disability.

The School operates a policy of automatic entitlement to interview for any disabled applicant who meets the essential criteria for a vacant post. In any event, although there may be practical difficulties in the appointment of some disabled people to the school, this will not be a factor in preventing their full and proper consideration and reasonable adjustments will be considered as required. The School acknowledges these areas of regulation and confirms its commitment to enforce these specific duties in the school.

The over-riding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Statutory Requirements

- **Age:** the School is opposed to any discrimination based on age.
- **Disability:** the School is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions of their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in the school. Where a candidate who has a disability is appointed to a post in the school, reasonable provision will be made for adjustments to the working conditions or environment where this is practicable.
- **Gender reassignment:** the School is opposed to any discrimination as a result of a person proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex.
- **Marital status or civil partnership:** the School is opposed to any discrimination against employees who are married or in a civil partnership.
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** the School is opposed to any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave.
- **Race:** the School is opposed to any discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin.
- **Religion or belief:** the School is opposed to any discrimination based on religion or belief.
- **Gender:** the School is opposed to any discrimination based on gender. However, there may be situations in the school which require special consideration and where a genuine and determining occupational requirement may apply to justify the employment of someone of a particular sex.

- Sexual Orientation: the School is opposed to any discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation.
- Harassment or bullying: the School is opposed to any unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The School is further opposed to any act of victimisation, harassment or bullying against any member of staff either by an employee or third party based on assumptions about their status in the above categories or any other grounds.
- Non-statutory aspects: although there is no statutory requirement not to discriminate against other groups, or characteristics of staff, the school wishes to state that it will not in any way discriminate against members of staff or applicants for posts on the grounds of their political affiliation.

Our Ethos of Caring

At Purley Oaks our ethos is based around five themes: CARING, SHARING, LEARNING, LISTENING and OURSELVES; this underpins everything we do. We provide our pupils with a rich social awareness and respect for others so that their contribution to the school community and society is both positive and one of tolerance. Our broad and balanced curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils. British society has a vast mix of faiths and communities and by enabling pupils to appreciate these differences, we ensure that our pupils respect and value one another.

We are committed to following DfE guidance in providing:

- teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of the differences that surrounds them.
- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- a programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of different communities support for pupils for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.

Advertising of Vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are exceptional reasons why this should not occur, for example in situations of potential redundancy.

Selection for Appointment or Promotion

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- a detailed job description will be drawn up which accurately describes the duties of the post
- an objective and detailed person specification will be defined from the job description
- from these documents a list of objectively assessed selection criteria will be drawn up
- role profiles, person specifications and selection criteria will be available to all candidates
- shortlisting will be carried out against the selection criteria and a written record retained
- all interview panel members must be trained in selection techniques
- at least one person on each panel will be trained in safer recruitment
- selection decisions will be made against the agreed criteria only
- a written record of the selection decision relating to the agreed criteria will be retained
- reasonable adjustments will be made to the recruitment and selection process where necessary to ensure that people with disabilities are enabled to compete for appointments in the school

The School recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the school. The School will therefore give full consideration to measures which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy.

The School will not discriminate in favour of individuals from specific groups, we will aim to:

- encourage applications from specific groups which are under-represented in the school
- encourage people with disabilities to apply for posts
- flexible working – promoting the use of job shares and flexible working where operational factors make this possible
- language/literacy training
- supporting training measure for under-represented groups
- assistance with applications for candidates with language problems
- signpost to staff childcare facilities or government funding to support with the costs of childcare for staff
- explore the possibility of career breaks to assist with family commitments
- commit to interviewing disabled people who meet the basic criteria for the post
- encourage staff to become representatives of trade unions/associations

Harassment and Grievance Procedures

Harassment has the effect of destroying dignity and undermining the confidence of employees. It can take many forms including physical contact, bullying, threatening or ignoring someone. It can be a series of offensive remarks or a single incident. It can be behaviour that staff find offensive, even if not directed at them, or harassment because of perception or association. The School is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all its staff in the school. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues.

The School will consider any acts of harassment including those on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or

belief, sex or sexual orientation, as totally unacceptable. Any such act by a member of staff against any adult or child will be treated as a disciplinary offence, and action taken accordingly.

The school has procedures to resolve grievances and for the handling of complaints of harassment and bullying at work. These procedures will be followed carefully and promptly in response to any complaint. The first point of contact should be the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (please see school office for contact details). Staff also have the right to approach their professional association or trade union representative for support.

Monitoring the Policy

An Equality and Diversity policy can only be shown to be effective if its implementation is properly monitored. Given the scope of our policy, this means monitoring both the existing staff of the school and all applications from outside of the school. The school will therefore keep records of existing staff and new applicants which can be analysed to provide data to assess whether this policy is working in practice.

The Council, as employer, requires that a recruitment monitoring analysis with respect to ethnic origin, gender and disability of all job applicants for all posts should take place. There is also a requirement for the school to provide the Authority, on request, with data with respect to gender, age and ethnic origin of all staff in the school.

Non-employment Aspects of Equality

This policy relates only to the employment aspects of the activities of the school. The principles outlined here by the School of fair and equal treatment apply equally to our approach to pupils and parents of the school and to our dealings with members of the local community and all outside agencies. The school's policy on equality in the curriculum and the treatment of pupils is set out in a separate policy document.

Training

The principles outlined above in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Requests for training will be considered in accordance with the school's operational priorities, based on the school's overall development plan and budget allocations.

Similarly, the training of the school managers and governors in issues of equality and discrimination, is an essential part of our Equality Policy. Where training is scheduled to take place on site, the school will, where possible, adapt the methods of training delivery if current arrangements disadvantage particular individuals or groups of staff.

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