Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Objectives

Statement

At Ottery St Mary Primary School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils.

Inclusion at Ottery St Mary Primary School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. It also ensures that we recognise and celebrate the differences that exist amongst us, that we treat all people fairly and that we strive to eliminate discrimination wherever it exists. This is a whole school policy – equality applies to all members of the school community: pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors, and also, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

Our principles

We see our first task as equipping pupils with an awareness of an increasingly diverse society. On such foundations, pupils will develop a sense of their own place in, and contribution to, a pluralistic society. The School acknowledges the complexity of society and recognises that it would be failing the pupils if it did not prepare them for their integral part in society. Thus,

1. Discrimination on the basis of colour, culture, origin, sex, ability, political and religious belief is unacceptable in this school.

2. Every pupil, member of staff and Governor will endeavour to further this objective by personally contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals.

3. The primary objective of this school will therefore be to educate, develop and prepare all our pupils, whatever their sex, colour, culture, origin or ability, for life.

4. An equal opportunities philosophy will be practised by all staff.

Equality Act 2010

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation.

The Governing Body of Ottery St Mary Primary School (the School) is responsible for ensuring that the School meets the requirements of the Equality Act. The Governing Body welcomes this responsibility and will :

- Ensure that everything the School does must be fair, non-discriminatory and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage.
- Ensure the school takes all reasonable steps to see that its employees do not carry out unlawful discriminatory actions or behaviour
- Support and guide the school to have 'due regard' for equality in all its functions
- Ensure the school complies with the two new 'specific' duties to publish equality information and objectives.
- To ensure the success of every pupil, equal opportunity is at the heart of our vision with an insistence that all pupils will do well.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

How will we put this into practice?

1. Admission
   The school follows the Local Authority Admission Policy, which does not permit (providing resources are available) sex, race, colour or disability to be used as a criteria for admission, augmented by creed and ability. This will be revised as the Local Authority change recommendations.

2. Registration
   Pupils' names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Pupils should be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

3. Discrimination
   All forms of discrimination by any person within the school are to be treated seriously. A careful note must be kept of such incidents, whether they take place in the playground, corridors or teaching areas. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable and further action could be taken.

   3.1 Pupils
   If there are subsequent incidents, then the appropriate senior staff member should be informed and consideration should be given to involving the parents. Racist and political symbols, badges and insignias on clothing and bags are forbidden in school. Graffiti should be immediately removed.

   3.2 Staff

The school values diversity amongst the staff. In all staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed, based on strict professional criteria. All staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.
In order to understand the background and experience of ethnic minority pupils and to raise expectations of their potential, staff need to be aware of the historical and contemporary processes which have caused, and may continue to sustain, racism. Close liaison with families in the school is beneficial to all concerned. Support and advice is available from the authority's multicultural support service. The school's pastoral care organisation should be used, particularly with regard to home/school liaison and for dealing with any situations of discrimination or harassment.

4. The Curriculum
All pupils must have equal opportunity of access to the school's curriculum. Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil. The curriculum must be balanced, objective and sensitive, and must not highlight sexual and cultural diversity.

5. Language
The school views linguistic diversity positively and staff should be aware of the language and dialect spoken by pupils and their families. Staff must be conscious of any racist or sexist connotations in the language they themselves use. Pupils and staff must feel that their language or dialect is valued.

6. Resources
The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origins. Whenever possible, staff must ensure that the resources used in all curriculum areas are multicultural and non-sexist.
Variety should be evident in the morals, stories and information offered to children. Pupils should have access to accurate information about similarities and differences.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Since April 2011, schools have been bound by a part of the Equality Act 2010 called the public sector equality duty (hereinafter referred to as the PSED or the 'equality duty').

The equality duty replaces the previous three sets of duties on schools to promote disability, gender and race equality through having equality polices and action plans for these groups. Whilst there is now no requirement for schools to have these equality policies, schemes and/or action plans the Governing Body will ensure that there will be no discrimination, harassment or victimization of a pupil or potential pupil because of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, in accordance with the 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act. These 'protected characteristics' are :

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

- Sexual orientation

Note : The protected characteristics of age and marriage and civil partnership apply to schools as employers, but not in relation to their provision for pupils.

The new equality duty has two parts: the 'general' duty and 'specific' duties.

The general duty

The general duty is the overarching legal requirement for schools and means they must consider how their policies, practices and day-to-day activities impact pupils and staff. Schools are required to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

The specific duties

The two specific duties for schools aim to assist them in meeting the general duty. These are:

- To publish information to show how they are complying with the equality duty. This must be updated at least annually
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

As a School we will publish information on :

- The diversity of the school population.
- How we are performing in relation to the three aims of the equality duty.
- We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors, and also, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

How will we achieve equality?

The School makes 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure equality and that no pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage. To make these reasonable adjustments we:

- plan ahead;
- identify potential barriers;
- work collaboratively;
- identify practical solutions through a problem-solving approach;
- ensure staff have the necessary skills;
- monitor the effects of the adjustments and this policy;
- consider the effect of any proposed change upon all members of the school community and the available resources.

Equality Objectives

The Governing Body have set the following Equality Objectives for the four academic years commencing 2013/14. These will be monitored by the Governing Body regularly, and reviewed at least annually in the summer term.

- Narrowing gaps in attainment between girls and boys, particularly in writing.
- Ensure effective use of Pupil Premium, closely monitoring its impact on disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity, for example increasing understanding between pupils from different faith communities.

Date last reviewed : May 2013

Date of next review : May 2017

Signed : …….

Mr Rob Baldry
Chair of Governors

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Mr Mark Gilronan
Headteacher