



Equality Policy

Croftlands Infant and Nursery School

Equality Statement

Be Caring, Be Happy and Always Do Your Best

This Equality Policy is intended to respond to the spirit as well as the letter of the Equality Act (2010). The policy recognises that the school has a duty to remove discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, by integrating equality into the school's core priorities and functions.

This Equality Policy will inform our School Development Plan as this will enable us to:

- Demonstrate how promoting equality and eliminating discrimination can help raise standards
- Ensure that equality and diversity are part of the school's core business both as a school and as an employer
- Ensure that our priorities for raising standards support our equality objectives

To ensure success and meet the Public Sector Equality Duty the school will:

- Publish annual information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED]
- Publish Equality objectives and review them annually

What do we mean by Equality and Diversity?

Equality refers to outcomes, making sure that all social groups benefit equally from our activities. Diversity recognises that we can only achieve equality by taking into account the different needs of the population. Equality is impossible to achieve without recognising diversity.

What do we mean by a Protected Characteristic?

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the concept of a Protected Characteristic. This is an aspect, or characteristic, of a person's identity that is protected from discrimination. The concept recognises that we are all individual, however that our individuality is made up of characteristics we share with others. The following are the nine Protected Characteristics recognised by the Equality Act:

- Gender
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Transgender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is a type of negative treatment that affects a whole group of people who share a Protected Characteristic, or an individual because they belong to a group. In the Equality Act this is called a Protected Characteristic. Discrimination is shaped by social assumptions that feed into:

- The way people behave towards each other
- The way in which institutions operate

Discrimination gives rise to long term patterns of inequality in terms of:

- Educational attainment
- Employment opportunities
- Distribution of wealth and resources
- Health
- Involvement in the criminal justice system

Direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourable than others because of their (real or perceived) ethnicity, disability, age, sexuality, religion/belief or gender.

Indirect discrimination is when there are rules or procedures that have the effect of discriminating against certain groups of people.

- This policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers and visitors to the school.
- This policy will also apply to any extended services we offer.
- A copy of the policy will be available in school for anyone who requests to see it.
- The head teacher will have the responsibility for managing the policy along with the governing body who will monitor the policy.
- A report on the progress of the action plan will be completed annually and made available within school. A summary will be added to the website each year.

Profile of our school

- Croftlands Infant and Nursery School have roughly an equal mix of boys and girls.
- The large majority of pupils are of white British origin, with one child each from Iran, Asia, Ireland, Spain and America. Only one child has English as a dual language.
- All staff are female, white British.
- At present on role we have one physically disabled child with one autistic child. We also have children dual registered from Sandside Special School.
- Our school is physically accessible and has disabled toilet facilities
- Our school council is made up from a mixture of year one and two children and has a mixture of boys and girls.

It is very important to note that it would not be appropriate for a school to publish information about its pupils or members of staff which may enable them to be identified. This is particularly relevant where there are very small numbers.

Nor, as a general rule, would it be appropriate to publish information that might be misunderstood by people outside the school. It would be inappropriate to publish information which might be used to harm the school's reputation.

It is also important to note that that schools need to respond **proportionally**, this means that, for example more is expected from a large school than a small school.

A second important principle is **flexibility**. This means that each individual school is expected to interpret the legislation in ways which are appropriate to its own context, neighbourhood, history and circumstances

Ethnicity Equality Policy

What are the key Race Equality issues for our school?

- The majority of our children are of white British origin.
- All staff are white British and female
- Only a small percentage of children are eligible for free school meals

What is your school's performance on Ethnicity and attainment?

- Due to the low proportion of ethnic groups in our school comparisons are difficult to make to countrywide or nationally. Analysis of our results show we do not have any issues with attainment of children from different ethnicity.

What steps has the school taken to address racial incidents and racist bullying?

- Racist incidents are reported to county and reported to the governors each term. We have had no racial incidents or racial bullying in the past four years.

What impact have we already had on race equality in our school?

- Regularly embrace visitors with disability as positive role models, e.g. disabled dancer, disabled person to take assemblies. Children accept this as normal and look forward to their visits.
- SEAL materials are consistently used within the curriculum along with persona dolls. Resources throughout the curriculum cover a wider spectrum of diversity. This has the impact of allowing children to discuss openly the various issues.
- School regularly takes learning outside the classroom and encourages open discussion linked to a range of experiences. Links with other areas of the country are being sought to offer a wider experience of positive ethnic minority roles.
- The school has had involvement with CDEC and accesses resources as required by the curriculum. Training courses are also accessed as available and feedback to the rest of the school.
- School uses every opportunity through the curriculum and extended curriculum to include visitors from diverse ethnic backgrounds to either support the curriculum or offer enhancement to the school. We are very careful not to reinforce stereotypes.
- Racist incidents are monitored and reported to County and negative attitudes are always challenged.

- LA support is accessed when children require support for English as a second language. This has taken the form of specialist teacher support for the children and the parents (particularly with communication).

Disability Equality Policy

Social and medical models of disability

One of our key goals is to challenge the view that the inequality faced by disabled people is down to their medical 'problems'.

The medical model has fed negative stereotypes held by non-disabled people such as:

- Focusing only on what a person cannot do.
- Making assumptions about what is best for the disabled person.
- Thinking that disabled people lack intelligence.
- Feeling embarrassed among disabled people.
- Bullying and harassing disabled people.



The social model focuses on the social environment and how it makes some people to be disabled:



With thanks to Stockton-on-Tees for diagram

What is a disability and how many disabled people are there in the UK?

Disability is any condition that affects a person in their day to day life. This can happen suddenly, for example as a result of an accident, or gradually as a result of a condition such as arthritis.

In the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) this is called an impairment. The DDA now recognises around 400 impairments including:

- Mobility impairments (requiring aids such as sticks or wheelchairs to move about).
- Sensory impairments (hearing or sight loss).
- Mental ill health (including depression, stress, Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia).
- Cognitive developmental impairments (including learning disabilities, dyslexia, and autism).

- Muscular impairments (including spinal injuries).
- Asthma
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Phobias
- Arthritis
- Acquired brain injuries.

Reasonable adjustments

The school is required to improve access to the curriculum, our buildings and our other services to disabled people. This also means that we need to take a proactive stance and anticipate what we may need in the future for disabled users.

The Schools Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually and kept up to date with the School Improvement Plan

Recruitment and Retention of disabled staff

Our school welcomes a diverse workforce and we wish for an ethos where potential and existing staff feel able to disclose any impairment that they have. This is not just for data collection purposes, but in order for the school to make any reasonable adjustments for this member of staff. All disclosures will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Disability and special educational needs

Not all pupils who are defined as disabled will have special educational needs. For example, those with severe asthma or diabetes may not have SEN but may have rights under the DDA. Similarly, not all children with SEN will be defined as having a disability.

What are the key issues for our school?

- At present we have two children with a disability and two who visit regularly from the local special school.
- At present, one child has restricted mobility and co-ordination, and another is on the autistic spectrum.
- All children are enabled to access all aspects of School life, for example, by providing additional support for extra-curricular activities, or alternative transport for School trips.
- Pupils with identified needs are found to make average to above average progress and are tracked through PIVATS and our school tracking scheme.
- At present we have one mid day supervisor with a disability but no governors. We always consider disabilities in a positive light when recruiting staff and governors.
- Disabilities are recorded in the application stage of recruitment and staff are encouraged to inform school if any personal issues are likely to impair their role in school.

- All staff are fully aware of the disability policy and its impact on the school and this is discussed at staff meetings for input and development of the action plan. The original plan took into account a wide range of stakeholders opinions based on a questionnaire.

What is your school's performance on Disability and attainment?

- Analysis of our results show we do not have any issues with attainment of children on the grounds of disability.

What steps has the school taken to address incidents of bullying against disabled people or that promote stigma about disability?

- Bullying incidents are reported to county and reported to the governors each term.
- We have inherent in our curriculum awareness and positive images of disability.

What impact have we already had on disability equality in our school?

Assistance Badges

All staff and visitors have access to 'assistance required badges' which are given to a child to pass to the first adult they see if assistance is required immediately. The visitor badges were identified as being a little difficult to attach for some people with disabilities and therefore badges on lanyards have been made accessible for these visitors.

The Learning Environment

Needs are constantly monitored for all users and an issue was identified with seating posture for a child with cerebral palsy and a Fox Denton chair was made available for his use.

Communication

The views of stakeholders regarding communication have been collected and analysed. A variety of methods has been seen to be the most effective including paper format and web based methods.

Gender Equality Policy

What is gender?

Gender refers to the social construction of female and male identity, rather than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued and used to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. Gender identity is not always fixed and the Gender Equality Duty urges us to have due regard to the needs of transgender people.

Gender has a major influence on the ways in which boys and girls perceive themselves in terms of their identities, their aspirations for their future, and their expectations about how people should treat them. In Cumbria there are a number of persistent gender inequalities which could be influenced positively by a school adopting a conscious Gender Equality policy. These include:

- Attitudes towards domestic and sexual violence.
- Reduction of gender segregation in employment
- Reduction of gender gaps in attainment and reduction of gender preferences for specific subjects.
- Development of healthy lifestyles that prevent future health risks that males and females are likely to suffer from in later life.

What are the key issues for our school?

- The main key issue is the profile of the school staff being totally female.

What is your school's performance on Gender and attainment?

- Analysis of our results show we do not have any issues with attainment of children on the grounds of gender.

What impact have we already had on gender equality in our school?

- We have the healthy schools award and are actively working towards the enhanced healthy schools award which takes account of gender issues related to the four key areas.
- The monitoring of achievement includes any differences between boy and girls. Consistently we have shown no significant differences between the two groups, but this is always a priority when considering progress.
- Children are actively encouraged to participate in all areas of school life regardless of gender. Positive role models are put forward at every opportunity and highlighted in the curriculum.

- The school as the healthy school award and employs a leading teaching for PE. Girls and boys all take an enthusiastic part in a range of sport activities.
- Incidents of bullying are monitored and dealt with seriously and effectively. These are reported to the governors and worked on as a whole school policy.

Sexuality Equality Policy

Sexual Orientation Equality Policy (Including Transgender)

Approximately 3% of the population are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. In Cumbria this is about 15,000 people. Developing an inclusive approach to understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment is critical to achieving Equality.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual young people have the same needs as all other young people - they want to feel safe, included and are able to fulfill their potential. The whole school should be involved in creating an atmosphere where everyone feels they can be themselves.

Homophobic bullying

Stonewall's 2007 research [The School Report](#) found that almost two thirds of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experience homophobic bullying in Britain's schools and 98 per cent hear phrases like 'That's so gay' or 'You're so gay'. School staff should also be aware of the consequences and what they can do. Stonewall's guide on [Challenging homophobic language](#) and [guidance](#)

Lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in the curriculum

The most effective way to prevent homophobic bullying and to ensure Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual young feel included and have the information they need to stay safe, is making the curriculum inclusive of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual issues.

Stonewall's 2009 report [The Teachers' Report](#) found that more than nine in ten secondary school teachers say Lesbian and Gay issues should be addressed in schools.

What are the key issues for our school?

- As far as we are aware, all staff are heterosexual and therefore there is limited contact during the normal school day with diverse role models.

What steps has the school taken to address homophobic bullying or language and behaviour to reduce homophobia in society?

- There have been no incidents of homophobic bullying over the past four years.
- Any misunderstanding of word use – for example 'gay' is tackled through our SEAL curriculum.

What impact have we already had on addressing Sexual Orientation and Equality in our school?

- All visitors are welcomed into the school regardless of their sexual orientation to provide support or enhancement to the curriculum.
- Positive role models in this area are encouraged.
- Positive attitudes are modelled by all members of staff.
- Due to the age of our children, staff are fully aware that issues are dealt with sensitively when they occur. The SEAL programme format is used when required.

Age Equality Policy

The Equality Act protects people from unfair treatment on the grounds of age. In terms of the school population, the Equality Act recognises that people aged below 16 can be treated differently and the Act is aimed at unfair treatment that is not justified by the policies of the school. This has particular application to staff employment policies.

There may be cases where a pupil's prime carers are teenagers, young adults, or grand parents, and that age equality can apply to norms and expectations that parents fit a standardised age group.

What are the key issues for our school?

- We are a single phase school educating children from 3 years to 7years.

What impact have we already had on age equality in our school?

- We have elected a school council involving children from years 1 and 2.
- All CPD opportunities and performance management opportunities are available to all staff, regardless of their career stage
- All children are given opportunities to shine and excel regardless of their age.

Religion/Belief Equality Policy

The Equality Act recognises that Religion and Belief as a Protected Characteristic. Whether a school is denominational or not, every school is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of its treatment of pupils, families and staff.

All policies need to ensure that they do not treat any person unfairly on the grounds of their Religion and Belief, and that where a person belongs to a religious minority, their faith is taken into account.

The policy also needs to treat atheists and agnostics on an equal footing to people who profess a faith. Also schools need to consider faith in relation to the curriculum.

What are the key issues for our school?

- We have a limited profile of religions represented in the school profile and within the wider community of the school.

What impact have we already had on religion/belief equality in our school?

Appreciating the reality for faith groups

In RE, specific religions are taught in such a way that pupils learn 'What it might be like to be Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist etc and the day-to-day life of faith groups, not just the festivals.

Appreciating any diversity we are able to access in school

We welcome any opportunity to draw on first-hand experience of other religious groups within School, and staff model positive and empathic attitudes.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Equality Act recognises that Pregnancy and Maternity is a Protected Characteristic. Every school is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of its treatment of pupils, families and staff.

It is important to ensure that all policies do not treat any person unfairly who is pregnant or who has recently given birth and that the person is not discriminated on those grounds.

In the case of a school, no pupil will be discriminated against purely on the grounds of pregnancy. Up to 18 calendar weeks authorised absence period may be given immediately before and after the birth in order to ensure that the student is reintegrated into education as quickly as possible.

Female members of staff are already covered under existing employment legislation.

What are the key issues for our school?

- Due to the age of our pupils, we do not have any issues in our school.

What provision do we already have in place for female students who are pregnant or have maternity needs within our school?

- Due to the age of our pupils we do not have any maternity needs in our school.

Good Relations Policy

This has now been incorporated into the Public Sector Equality Act as a Duty to Foster Good relations between people who share a Protected Characteristic and people who do not.

What is meant by good relations?

Good relations between people from different backgrounds exist when:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued
- Similar life opportunities are available to all
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in schools and our communities
- There is a coherent and robust policy on all types of bullying, along with specific measures to address bullying related to identity.

Schools and their communities

Good community relationships have to be owned by all organisations and community groups if it is to be effective. Schools belong to many different communities. Our school's communities include:

- the *school community* – our pupils, their families, school staff, school governors, users of the school's facilities
- the *local community* – our school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in the area
- the *UK community* – we are by definition part of this
- the *global community* – formed by EU and international links
- Network based on the local high school.
- Small schools' consortium.
- Network of local single-phase infant schools.

What are the key issues for our school?

- Raising the positive profile of the two schools in the community.
- The remoteness of the community in relation to the rest of the UK

What impact have we already had on community cohesion in our school?

Teaching, learning and curriculum

- Promoting shared values
- Building pupils' understanding of their own identity and the diversity around them
- Having high expectations of all pupils
- Skilling pupils to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping

Examples:

- We provide support for pupils for whom English is an additional language where necessary
- We invite people from the community to take assemblies.
- We involve members from local communities within our curriculum and the day to day running of the school
- We include global citizenship in the curriculum and through fundraising. We also sponsor a child in India
- Local communities are visited when relevant to the curriculum. This will become much more high profile with the implementation of the new primary curriculum in September 2011

Equity and excellence

- Analysing assessment results to identify performance of different groups
- Tackling underperformance by any particular group
- Removing barriers to access to the school for all groups

Examples:

- We have a whole school behaviour policy
- Our admission policy is adopted from the local Education authority.
- Data is carefully monitored to ensure underperformance is identified and tackled appropriately.

Engagement with extended services

- Building positive relations with different groups
- Building meaningful partnerships with the local authority, parents, local community groups and voluntary groups
- Enabling the pupil voice to be heard and enable change

Examples:

- We have forged links with Ramsden Infant school and South Walney Infants. We interchange with Sandside school. We are currently investigating links with a school on the Wirral. We have links with a child in India.
- We have a member of the constabulary on our governing body and he regularly supports the school.
- We are in partnership with the local high school and the Children's Centre who provide support for staff and children.
- We visit the local community centre to provide support and entertainment.
- We have a strong partnership with the Princes Trust who are providing support for the development of our wild area.
- We have a strong partnership with a local play group, after school club and breakfast club.

