



# **Thistly Meadow Primary School EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

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(To be read in conjunction with policies for Overarching Behaviour and Special Educational Needs and Disability)

### **Introduction**

At Thistly Meadow Primary School we value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to provide all children every opportunity to achieve their very best in all areas of the curriculum. We offer a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum and create a tolerant, caring and supportive environment which promotes equality and mutual respect. Children respect themselves, others and the world in which they live. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter.

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities and extends to adults: staff, parents and carers. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for both children and adults, giving due regard to groups with the 'protected characteristics' in accordance with the Act:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

Reference should also be made to the school's PSHE policy.

### **Aims and objectives**

At Thistly Meadow Primary School, we:

- will not to discriminate against anyone; staff, pupil or parent/carer, on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, attainment or background.
- will promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.
- seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils.

- will ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- value each pupil's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our school community, and showing respect for all minority groups.
- are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

## **Racial equality**

At Thistly Meadow Primary School, we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multicultural society.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school's Behaviour policy.

## **Diversity**

We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school. Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups - for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

## **Disability non-discrimination**

Some children at Thistly Meadow Primary School may have medical, sensory or physical disabilities, in addition to their special educational needs. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children and all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non-disabled children.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows physical/sensory disabled children and adults full access to the school premises and to all areas of learning. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with physical/sensory disabilities. For example, they may modify teaching materials or offer alternative activities if children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

## **Gender equality**

We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress

possible in our school.

We have put in place a number of measures to raise the achievement of both boys and girls. These may include:

- ensuring that early literacy skills are promoted in all activities in the Foundation Stage
- ensuring that the starting points for writing activities capture the interests and imagination of boys and girls alike
- removing gender bias from our resources employing a variety of activities, and include a kinaesthetic element
- making sure that our school environment promotes positive role models, in relation to learning and achievement
- minimising stereotyping
- providing challenge, competition and short-term goals
- valuing and celebrating academic achievement in ways which will motivate both girls and boys

If our analysis of pupils' attainment data indicates areas where girls achieve less well than boys – or vice versa - we will take measures to address this discrepancy. These may include:

- ensuring that individuals do not dominate certain lessons, for example by answering the teacher's questions more readily
- ensuring that all learning activities are relevant to real life situations and problems
- beginning lessons by clarifying the learning intentions, and giving the 'big picture'
- minimising female and male stereotyping
- using praise and celebration of girls' and boys' achievements in those areas where they may traditionally achieve less well than the opposite gender

We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to the relative achievement of boys and girls. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve the attainment of one gender group does not do so at the expense of the other.

### **The role of the class teacher**

Class teachers ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls.

All staff ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice. We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues - for example, in geography, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Incidents are dealt with by the Head teacher and recorded.

### **The role of the Head teacher**

It is the Head teacher's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for continuing professional development for all staff
- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life - in school assemblies, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment – and/or any racist incidents - with due seriousness, and in line with this policy.

### **The role of the Governing Body**

In this policy statement, the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The governing body analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:

- progress over time
- attainment
- attendance
- exclusions
- rewards and sanctions
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires

The governing body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 (see section 1.2 above) are not discriminated against when applying for a position at the school. The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or minority group a child may come from.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities. The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their gender, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and requirements regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

## **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school
- monitor the progress of boys and/or girls, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school
- monitor the progress of pupils from vulnerable groups – including specific SEN cohorts and compare it with the progress made by other pupils in the school
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against
- require the Head teacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity
- monitor the school's Behaviour Policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated

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