

## Policy for Equality Columbia Primary School

This document describes how the Governing Body of Columbia School intends to fulfill its responsibilities under the 2010 Equality Act with regard to its pupils and its workforce. The Equality Objectives will be part of the School Improvement Plan and information will be published on the Equalities page of the school website.

Columbia is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people.

The equality act covers nine protected characteristics, described below. Columbia school will make the learning environment and the work environment fair and consistent for all members and ensure that we comply with the law.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age - the Act protects people of all ages
- Disability - under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- Gender Reassignment - the Act provides protection for trans-sexual people. A trans-sexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership - the Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination.
- Pregnancy and Maternity - a woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
- Race - for the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
- Religion or Belief - in the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. A religion must have a clear structure and belief system.
- Sex - both men and women are protected under the Act.
- Sexual Orientation - the Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

**Our approach to equality is based on these key principles:**

- **We believe all learners and staff are of equal value** whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background, whatever their sexual orientation and whether they have a disability.

- **We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face.** We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- **We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- **We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

**We will have due regard of the need to:**

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

**We will collect and use equality information to help us to:**

Identify key issues:

- understand the impact of our policies, practices and decisions on staff and pupils with different protected characteristics, and thereby plan them more effectively;
- assess whether we are discriminating unlawfully when carrying out any of our functions; and
- identify what the key equality issues are for our organisation.

Assess performance:

- benchmark our performance and processes against those of similar organisations, nationally or locally.

Take action:

- consider taking steps to meet the needs of pupils and staff who share relevant protected characteristics;
- identify if there are any actions we can take to avoid discrimination and harassment, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations;
- make informed decisions about policies and practices which are based on evidence about the impact of our activities on equality;
- develop equality objectives to meet the specific duties; and
- have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty by ensuring that staff have appropriate information for decision-making.

### **We aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for differently abled pupils which is designed to enhance their access and participation to an equal level as all pupils and stop differently abled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which values respect for all members of the community.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair, transparent and conform to LA guidelines.

### **We aim to address prejudice and prejudice based bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality. Details of how we do this can be found in our Behaviour Policy.

### **We promote equality of opportunity between different groups**

- We collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.
- We collect, analyse and publish data:
  - on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
  - on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need
  - by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender
  - on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and EAL
- We analyse the standards reached by different groups at the end of each year with regard to:
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
    - Bangladeshi
    - White British
    - Other Ethnicities
  - Disadvantage
  - EAL

- o SEN
  - o Looked after Children
- We collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
  - We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
  - We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

### **Governing Body**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

### **Headteacher and Leadership team**

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.

They will ensure that teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils;
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult; and
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with this policy.

## **Equality for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equalities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff are of equal value whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background, whatever their sexual orientation and whether they have a disability.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

We will work towards developing an equality profile of staff to help us to understand key equality issues in our school. This will include any evidence of pay gaps or 'occupational segregation' i.e. staff with certain protected characteristics being over-represented in particular roles. In addition, we note that it is likely to be useful to collect and consider information, appropriately analysed, according to:

- recruitment and promotion
- numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- pay and remuneration
- training
- return to work of women on maternity leave
- return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their different ability
- appraisals
- grievances (including about harassment)
- disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- dismissals and other reasons for leaving.

## **Disseminating the policy**

- This Equality Policy is available: on the school website and as part of induction for new staff.
- We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- We will collect and use workforce information to effectively meet the general equality duty.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

Position:

Date:

Approved in June 2022 by the Curriculum and General Purposes Committee on behalf of the Governing Body of Columbia School.  
To be reviewed in June 2025 unless any statutory documentation is published which supersedes this policy.