

# Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation

## Equalities statement and objectives (Policy)

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and have read and understood its contents.

Date written: March 2024

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024

Date of next full review:

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

## Key Contacts

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## **Our Equality Statement**

Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation Equality Statement (Policy) integrates our statutory duties in relation to race, disability and gender and promotes community cohesion. The duties cover all stakeholders (governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers and any visitor to the school).

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity and age and therefore includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas. Our Equality Policy enables us to achieve a framework for action and ensures that we meet our responsibilities of the public sector duties in an inclusive way.

The Equality Act 2010 is, therefore, an important and significant piece of legislation because it is the bedrock to our school values of THRIVE. The aim is that Lydden and River Primary Schools are equal and inclusive schools, where *everyone is valued* and difference is understood and respected.

In carrying out their functions, schools are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Part One sets out the school's aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Act; Part Two sets out the legal duties. To view the school's current equality objectives, see Appendix One of this policy.

## **Legislation and guidance**

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

## **Part One - Our Aims**

The core aim of Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation is to be an equal and inclusive school, where everyone is valued and difference is understood and respected. We enable all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognizing their strengths and encouraging them to achieve. At Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation, we will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics (age, race, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief and pregnancy and maternity, gender, sexual orientation) within the school community.

This means that:

- We take reasonable and necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling our pupils to take as full a part as possible in all the activities of the school.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment and its activities are as accessible and welcoming as possible for pupils, staff and visitors to the school. We are also committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- We actively encourage positive attitudes towards pupils and staff and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- We ensure that the taught and wider curriculum help to promote awareness of the rights of

individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

- We ensure that our teaching and curriculum provision (through our curriculum Drivers) support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help children to understand and value and diversity that surrounds them and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- We monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics. This information helps the school to ensure that individual pupils are achieving, that we are being inclusive in practice and that trends are identified which inform the setting of our equality objectives.
- We collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to safer recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure that all staff have equality of opportunity. We do not put health-related questions to job applicants before offering a job, unless it relates to an intrinsic function of the work they do.
- We ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is an additional language. We ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits and we monitor the uptake of these to ensure that no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- We seek the views of advisory staff and outside agencies and partnerships with other schools where this is needed. In planning the curriculum and resources we take every opportunity to promote and advance equality using our curriculum Drivers and our core values of THRIVE.
- Bullying and prejudice related incidents are carefully monitored and dealt with effectively and promptly. Regular training is given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.
- We expect all staff to be role-models for equal opportunities, to deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents effectively and to be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- We will ensure consultation is regularly sought in the development and review of this policy.
- We regularly seek the views of pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the school to ensure that the school environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all school users. We regularly review our accessibility plans.
- We ensure that all staff are aware of their legal duties under the Equality Act, the different forms of discrimination and what 'reasonable adjustments' mean in practice.
- Our equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on regularly.

### **The Hidden Curriculum**

Staff will take measures to ensure that they:

1. Use language which does not reinforce stereotypes.
2. Actively challenge stereotypes with initiatives such as female led British Science Week.
3. Challenge inappropriate language used by any stakeholders so that their awareness is raised.
4. Ensure that boys and girls are given the same range of jobs so that gender stereotypes are challenged.
5. Ensure that display work is free from gender bias and offers positive images.
6. Ensure that access to extra-curricular activities are balanced.
7. Monitor the use pupils make of the space outside the classroom so that neither gender dominates.

### **Part Two - Our Legal Duties**

We will not tolerate racism, sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices. Any breach of this policy is dealt with by a member of the senior leadership team. Where further action is needed, this will be taken in line with the school's behaviour policy or staff discipline and conduct procedure or complaints policy.

### **Breaches of Policy**

Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation views any form of discrimination as a serious act of misconduct. Any allegation of a breach in the policy will be investigated by a member of the SLT or where appropriate the Governing Body. This may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action being taken.

## Legislation

Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010. This legislation covers employment (work), the provision of services and public functions, and education. Employers (schools) are liable for discriminatory acts of their employees if they did not take reasonable steps to prevent such acts. Employees can be liable for acts (where an employer took reasonable steps to prevent such acts).

The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are:

- Age - A person of a particular age (e.g. 32 year old) or a range of ages e.g. 18-30 year old). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, 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. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
- Gender reassignment - A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment.
- Marriage and civil partnership – Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- Pregnancy and maternity - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.
- Race - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travelers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
- Religion and belief - Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
- Gender - A man or a woman.
- Sexual orientation - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils. It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated. So, for example, a school must not discriminate by refusing to admit a pupil because his parents are gay men or lesbians.
- 'Prohibited Conduct' (acts that are unlawful):
  - Direct discrimination - Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
  - Indirect discrimination - A provision, criteria or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
  - Harassment - Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.
  - Victimisation - Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a complaint) brought in connection with this Act.
  - Discrimination arising from disability - Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments.
  - Gender re-assignment discrimination - Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purpose of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision such as sick leave.

- Pregnancy/maternity related discrimination - Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a woman or girl if she is breastfeeding.
- Discrimination by association or perception - For example, discriminating against someone because they “look gay”, or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative. Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.
- Public Sector Duties (applies to schools): A school must, in the exercise of its duty to give due regard to the need to (in relation to protected characteristics above):
  1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
  2. Advance equality of opportunity (remove or minimise disadvantage; meet people’s needs; take account of disabilities; encourage participation in public life).
  3. Foster good relations between people (tackle prejudice and promote understanding). In practice, ‘due regard’ means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty, so decision makers in schools must have due regard when making a decision, developing a policy or taking an action as to whether it may have implications for people because of their protected characteristics.

### **Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans**

Schools are required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.

### Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will:

- Increase disabled pupils’ access to the school curriculum
- Improve the physical environment
- Improve provision of information.

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The school will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the relevant admissions authority as appropriate.

The Accessibility Plan can be viewed on the school website.

### **Diversity Complaints**

Lydden and River Primary Schools Federation takes seriously all complaints; where a complaint is related to equality/diversity issues, the school procedure for dealing with complaints will apply. This is made accessible through the school website or is available in an alternative format as requested. Complaints should be made to the Executive Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.

### **On-going evaluation of our statement**

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing development of our Equality Statement.

This includes:

- A regular slot at School Council meetings to discuss equality, diversity and accessibility issues.
- A regular slot at staff meetings.
- Having staff available to discuss equality and diversity matters during parent consultation meetings.
- Having regular school open sessions for the wider school community to celebrate the work of pupils and give the opportunity for feedback.

**Annual Review of Progress**

We will continue to review annually the actions we have taken in the development of our Equality Statement which include:

- The results of information gathering activities for race, disability and gender and action taken and achievements.
- An update of the progress made against priorities.
- Celebration of achievements in relation to promoting community cohesion.

## **APPENDIX 1: River Primary Equality Objectives**

### **Objective 1: Disadvantaged pupils**

To regularly review data for disadvantaged pupils to identify successes and areas to further improve in order to close the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Actions:

- Termly tracking and analysis of progress data, attendance data and extra-curricular activities data.
- Pupil progress meetings to discuss these children as individuals throughout x3 per year.
- Early identification of groups for appropriate interventions and teacher led interventions where possible.
- Impact of actions taken reviewed regularly.
- Pastoral provision implemented by trained staff for identified children
- Attendance meetings organised to support families to achieve better attendance.
- Subsidy of activities such as trips or extra-curricular activities to increase children's access to enrichment activities.

Evidence of impact:

- Attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children reduced.
- Progress of disadvantaged children improved.
- Attendance data improved
- Club data improved

### **Objective 2: Gender**

To diminish the difference between boys' and girls' reading and writing and the difference in 'girls' and 'boys' achievement in maths.

Actions:

- Whole school CPD and agreement for writing standards
- Teacher CPD on planning and delivering writing lessons
- Change to whole school timetable for teaching maths
- Intervention and targeted booster groups
- Profile of reading for pleasure raised

Evidence of Impact:

- The difference between progress and achievement of boys and girls will be diminished.

### **Objective 3: Develop support for children with English as an additional language**

Ensure that families where English is an additional language receive and understand communication from the school to support their child's education.

Actions:

- Review the different languages that are represented across the school
- Create resources in home language to engage families – consult with these families about further support they would like.
- Diversify the resources, including texts we have available for some of these children

Evidence of Impact

- Accelerated progress of this group of children

## **APPENDIX 2: Lydden Primary School Equality Objectives**

### **Objective 1: Disadvantaged pupils**

To regularly review data for disadvantaged pupils to identify successes and areas to further improve in order to close the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Actions:

- Termly tracking and analysis of progress data, attendance data and extra-curricular activities data.
- Pupil progress meetings to discuss these children as individuals throughout x3 per year.
- Early identification of groups for appropriate interventions and teacher led interventions where possible.
- Impact of actions taken reviewed regularly.
- Pastoral provision implemented by trained staff for identified children
- Attendance meetings organised to support families to achieve better attendance.
- Subsidy of activities such as trips or extra-curricular activities to increase children's access to enrichment activities.

Evidence of impact:

- Attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children reduced.
- Progress of disadvantaged children improved.
- Attendance data improved
- Club data improved

### **Objective 2: Race, disability and gender**

To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular opportunities with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity, particularly with regard to SEND pupils, pupils with a medical condition and faith groups.

Actions:

- To develop a wide range of after school clubs, and monitor inclusion of pupils in all groups.
- Develop opportunities for children to participate in a range of wider school events.
- Develop our induction process to support those children new to school (and English).
- To engage the support of relevant agencies to support children with medical and physical needs to ensure their access to the school curriculum is maximized.

Evidence of Impact:

- Increased participation of SEND, disadvantaged and EAL pupils in wider school opportunities.
- Curriculum to include a variety of topics and rich text map to include aspects of equality and diversity and to promote tolerance and respect.
- All curriculum subjects to consider how diversity can be linked into their subjects as a core curriculum driver.