

MERRYLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

For all enquiries about the scheme please contact

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We welcome the equality duties in schools, and regard these as essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework. We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of the school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our learners, staff, governors and parents in particular. Throughout this Scheme, ‘parents’ can be taken to mean mothers, fathers, carers and other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Single Equality Scheme provides a framework for the school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by

- active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this Scheme but also in its review and implementation
- proactive leadership
- prioritising activities that produce specific, tangible improved outcomes
- removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within the school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. Our Scheme includes a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years. We recognise that improving outcomes such as attendance or attainment for a specific group of pupils will help to improve the outcomes for all. Our commitment to equality is thus a fundamental part of the Trust vision to create and foster a culture of high aspiration, enjoyment for learning, academic success and lifelong skills amongst all pupils, regardless of their social, economic or cultural background.

National and Legal Context for Diversity

All schools have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality. The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote quality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must have due regard to

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourable than other people

The disability equality general duty reinforces the reasonable adjustment duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, it complements, and in some cases overlaps with, the anticipatory duty to make adjustments.

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote quality of opportunity between men and women

Schools also have specific duties under these three promotional duties. This Scheme demonstrates our response to both the general and specific duties.

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. There are no statutory requirements for schools to have a policy or action plan for promoting community cohesion. However, we have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty. Although there are no equivalent promotional duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, we must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

School Context

The Basildon district is situated in the southern part of Essex, 30 miles east of London. Covering some 42.5 square miles, the district includes the towns of Basildon, Billericay and Wickford. Some 70% of the district is rural with large areas of open farmland and scattered rural developments. Basildon is the largest district in the East of England region and the council serves a population of approximately 176,000 people. The main areas of employment are engineering, retail, distribution and financial services. As a major player in the Thames Gateway region, Basildon is a priority area for regeneration and is recognised as the business and economic hub of south Essex. Basildon is now the second biggest employment zone in the Thames Gateway, outside of Canary Wharf.

The School

Merrylands Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school with 556 pupils currently on roll. We admit 60-90 pupils per year group. 22.66% of our pupils are from minority ethnic groups compared to 23% nationally, 14.93% of pupils do not have English as a first language and 6.12% of pupils are deemed to have special educational needs compared to 19.7% nationally. 18.35% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

Involvement of staff, pupils and parents

Developing our Scheme

The involvement of a diverse group of people has been instrumental in shaping our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We have strived to involve the full diversity of our school and community, recognising that people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief are best placed to identify key issues for us to address. In developing our Scheme, we have involved staff, pupils and parents in the following ways

- focus groups
- questionnaires
- involvement of the school council
- contact with disabled parents

These activities have involved disabled people, people from different ethnic communities and gender by specific contact and liaison.

We have identified the following **priorities** as a result of these activities

- physical access to the school building for different events
- reserving seats for presentations and concerts
- reserving places for the children in after school activities
- ensuring that staff and school office are aware of any communication/language issues

Ongoing development

We have strategies in place to promote the participation of pupils in decision-making and in making a positive contribution to school life. We will embed equality and inclusion into these strategies so that learners from diverse backgrounds are involved in shaping provision and improving practice. We ensure that outcomes from these involvement activities are acted upon by the school's senior leadership team.

Strategies to promote inclusion are:

- pupil focus groups and School Council
- fund to involve families and pupils in specific activities during and after school with a subsidy or free
- pupil surveys led by the Healthy Schools coordinator

Information Gathering

We will collect a broad range of qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our policies and practice and to demonstrate our progress in equality, inclusion and community cohesion. The single equality approach helps us to more effectively monitor our progress and performance, as our pupils and staff may face more than one barrier to achieving their full potential.

Pupils

We collect the following information

Admissions, attendance, attainment and progression, awards, rewards and sanctions, take up of extended schools provision, participation in action teams and special groups, complaints, racist incidents and bullying.

We have identified the following **priorities** from evaluation of this information

- wave 2 & 3 pupils attainment and progress rates
- ensuring a wider participation in school groups

- responding to specific requests for additional clubs and learning to involve more pupils (not just sport)
- recording bullying incidents on the new Trust documentation

We will ensure that the information we gather will be used to promote equality by

- writing raising attainment plans each term based on data reviews of all pupils and vulnerable groups
- coordinating provision with the Extended Services Team for social and emotional family and pupil learning opportunities

Staff

We collect the following information

Staff recruitment and retention returns annually, performance management reviews, CPD provision and attendance, discipline, grievance and competency, lesson reviews and feedback, cessation of employment.

We have identified the following **priorities** from evaluation of this information

- review the balance of gender and race in employment at all levels across the school. We will ensure that the information we gather will be used to promote equality
- where the best candidates for a post are representative of any group then the candidate selected will support equality of opportunity by gender, race or disability

Others

We will seek to gather the views regularly of all our parents and will review the feedback to provide specific feedback in these areas

- absent parents
- disabled parents
- parents with communication barriers through direct liaison by the Headteacher, Admin Manager or Governor

Specific Equality Areas

This section of our Scheme highlights what we have already achieved for specific aspects of equality, and further action that we intend to take.

Race Equality

What we have already achieved:

- recording and reporting of all racist incidents
- appointing male staff
- regular celebration of diverse cultural achievements and well known people

We want to do more by:

- ensuring adult role models are reflective of a diverse range of cultures (staff and visitors)
- enriching the curriculum to incorporate opportunities to learn about different cultures and races

Community Cohesion

What we have achieved already

- a broad range of cultures studied across the curriculum and age ranges
- whole school events to celebrate diversity

- community project involvement in the locality
- weekly reviews of 'In the News' (national and global issues)
- charity group and fund-raising promotions
- robust analysis of performance data
- early intervention for learning support
- provision for social and emotional issues
- financial support to participate in extended and family learning opportunities
- parent support groups and training programmes available for all

We want to do more by developing

- a stronger awareness of cultural diversity in the UK
- greater global awareness with school community

Disability Equality

What we have already achieved

Physical environment

- created an alternative entrance for wheel chair access
- provision of a ramp is available within the school

Curriculum

- our school uses religious education and theme days to provide our pupils with a broad part of the curriculum

Aids & Equipment

- laptops, wi-fi, additional staff, specialist chairs etc

Written information

- greater use of email and text

We want to do more by

- provision of alternative language format when requested
- promote visits by disabled presenters and adults

Gender Equality

What we have already achieved

- increased number of male role models on staff body
- reviewed the curriculum to promote gender friendly writing opportunities

We want to do more by

- maintaining a positive gender balance within the staff body
- ensure promotion opportunities are reflective of the gender balance across the school
- continue to identify gender performance and curriculum adaptations to achieve equality of opportunity

Other Equality Areas

What we have already achieved

- following the guidance provided by the government to ensure that sex and relationship advice is sensitively managed and discussed by staff with pupils
- reviewed the behaviour policy to show that harassment and bullying is not tolerated
- reviewed the RE curriculum to provide authentic first hand learning experiences
- promote inter faith collective worship

Impact Assessment

We will carry out equality impact assessments on our policy and practice which will cover all aspects of equality: race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We will look for ways to improve practice as well as ways to eliminate discrimination and harassment. We have a programme of carrying out impact assessment process into all new policy development and decision making activities.

We will do this through

- annual/cycle reviews of policies by staff and governors
- annual/cycle reviews of progress and attainment for all pupils and vulnerable groups
- pupil progress meetings and attainment plans

Working in Partnership

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

We will always aim to reschedule consultations and meetings to accommodate the needs of parents where possible.

Putting the Scheme into Practice

Publishing the Scheme, raising awareness

We recognise that our Scheme is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder. We will promote and publish our Scheme by:

- placing it on our website
- making it available on request
- providing a summary in our prospectus, including our vision and key priorities
- reference the Scheme within the staff handbook

Monitoring and evaluating the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan. We will report annually on our progress and performance. Our annual report will be shared with Governors and our School Improvement Partner. We will inform staff and learners of our progress. This report will be written by the governor responsible for monitoring the school equality duty.

The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Equality Action Plan and inform subsequent Single Equality Schemes.

We want this Scheme to be a 'whole organisational' document that drives forward equality and achieves improved outcomes. We will therefore ensure that the Equality Action Plan is an integral part of our School Improvement Plan, and as such our progress will have regular oversight by the senior leadership team and the governing body.

We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan every three years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will again involve staff, learners, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of the school community.

Links with other School Policies

School policies that link with, and have informed this Scheme include

- Inclusion and SEN Policy
- Racist Incidence Policy
- Behaviour, Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Pay Policy
- Admissions Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body will

- monitor the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan to check progress and assess impact on staff, learners and parents
- ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation
- receive and discuss regular equality reports on progress and performance
- monitor achievement of equality targets
- check that implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan achieves improved outcomes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to race, disability, gender (including gender identity), age, sexual orientation, religion and belief

The Head of School will

- provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation
- ensure staff, pupils, parents/carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Scheme and their roles and responsibilities in implementing this Scheme
- monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance
- allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this Scheme
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The senior leadership team will

- drive forward implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan
- support staff to carry out their role in implementing this Scheme
- provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- ensure the Scheme is successfully promoted
- respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, harassment or victimisation

All staff will

- recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to
 - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
 - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
 - tackle bias and stereotyping
 - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and report these
- highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities

All staff will also ensure that students are encouraged to

- recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they

understand and are able to

- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

MERRYLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2017 – 2021

Code: R = Race SO = Sexual Orientation D = Disability RB = Religion or belief G = Gender A = Age CC = Community cohesion

	Priority	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Timescale	Expected Outcomes
Race Equality	Ensure that adult role models are reflective of a range of cultures	Through the staff appointment procedures be aware of the need to promote race equality Invite a range of visitors to school where possible to promote race awareness	NF and SLT All staff	Ongoing	Where equal outcomes to recruitment procedures are found, consideration to race equality issues will be employed A range of visitors in school reflective of differing races and cultures Curriculum map revised. New units written and prepared Resources around the school reflect race equality awareness

Disability Equality	Break down barriers to perceptions of disability	Review the achievements of disabled role models nationally and globally Ensure a range of visitors enable pupils to engage positively with disabilities Provide large text where required	NF and SLT	On going	In assembly show inclusion and celebration of diversity A range of visitors with disabilities in school School office making the provision when required
Gender Equality	Ensure the school promotes gender equality through recruitment procedures where possible Continue to create engaging learning opportunities that promote achievement with boys	Apply the principles of equal opportunities and gender equality to recruitment selection procedures at all times Provision of boy friendly text. Lesson design that responds to learning needs of boys	NF and SLT All staff	Ongoing	A balance of male/female role models evident in staff profile Library with sufficient and appropriate texts Lesson observations to show 'chunky' structure and high challenge
Community Cohesion	Achieve a greater awareness of national community identity Ensure global community awareness is authentic and reflective of all races	Citizenship and RE subject reviews to establish curriculum reform	GC MPe NP	Ongoing	The planned curriculum represents national and global community learning opportunities

Sexual Orientation	Ensure that Sex & Relationship Education recognises diverse family structures	Ensure all staff respond appropriately to questions raised by children	CCh All staff	Ongoing	Pupils recognise that families are made from a range of gender and sexual orientations
Religious Belief	Ensure tolerance of all beliefs are expected by staff and pupils	Staff handbook and induction procedures to raise awareness of sensitivity towards diverse religious beliefs Pupil behaviour expectations of tolerance towards all differences	MPe NP All staff	Ongoing	School ethos is recognised as tolerant and supportive of diversity
Age	Ensure staff profile is representative of all ages	ECC employment guidelines are followed Staff employed are physically and mentally fit for work in the posts for which they are engaged	NF	Ongoing	Employment law adhered to