

## **Wark C of E First School** **Equality Policy**

### **Introductory notes**

After the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there was longer a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives. This statement has been amended in the light of the Equality Act 2010.

### **Legal framework**

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), sex, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and more recent directives to teach about character and values through SMSC in the curriculum.

We recognise these duties are essential, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **Guiding principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

#### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.**

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- 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

#### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.**

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background, or having no religious beliefs

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- sexual identity
- gender identity

### **Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language or discrimination

### **Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.**

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

### **Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- children from disadvantaged backgrounds

### **Principle 6: Society as a whole should benefit.**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations
- gender variant people

**Principle 7: We base our practices on sound evidence.**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

**Principle 8: Data.**

Each year we formulate and publish data we have collected in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- disadvantage

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this will have an impact if we set ourselves challenging and measurable objectives to demonstrate this commitment.

**The Curriculum**

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

**Ethos and organisation**

We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community
- safeguarding children in education

**Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against

Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum.

- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- prejudice which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism

There is clear guidance for teachers defining how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously the expectation that we will report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of race-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with. We also draw on the support of

Northumbria Police and partner organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card

### **Roles and responsibilities**

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.

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.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

### **Information and resources**

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources and training which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

### **Religious observance**

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

### **Staff development and training**

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.

### **Breaches of the policy**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, language, disadvantage and gender.

*This policy has been adapted from a model originally developed and published by Robin Richardson of INSTED Consultancy*

## **DEALING WITH RACIST INCIDENTS**

### **GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS**

School Governors have agreed to adopt the guidelines below as the method to dealing with Racist Incidents

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this section is to give schools practical support and advice in dealing with racist incidents. It aims to give guidance especially in response to the question: What do I do if a racist incident occurs here?

In the light of the growing number of racist incidents in schools nationally in recent years, the guidelines therefore offer advice on:-

1. Identifying racist incidents.
2. Dealing with incidents concerning students.
3. Further implications for headteachers and governors.
4. Self-evaluation checklist.

#### **Identifying racist incidents**

School (Northumberland County Council) recognises the following as examples of racist incidents which it finds unacceptable:-

- derogatory name calling, insults and racist 'jokes'
- verbal abuse and threats
- racist graffiti
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia
- racist comments in the course of discussions
- ridicule of an individual's cultural differences, e.g. food, music, dress, language etc.
- bringing racist materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines into the institution
- using computer systems to access and/or distribute racist material
- attempts to recruit other students into racist organisations
- physical assault which is racially motivated
- damage caused to a person's property which is racially motivated
- incitement of others to behave in a racist way
- refusal to co-operate with other people because of their ethnic origin.

These may involve students, teachers, support staff, governors, parents or visitors to the school site.

It is important to note that the school's responsibility in dealing with racist incidents should extend beyond the classroom and into the school environment. Schools should attempt to deal with young people and staff involved in racist behaviour which can be attributed to them as a member of the school community.

Schools need to be aware that such incidents can and do occur in schools where no student is from a minority ethnic background.

### **Dealing with incidents concerning pupils**

School in line with (The Education Directorate recommendations) will follow the following procedures if any racist incidents occur. The context, the age of the student(s) involved and the seriousness of the incident will influence how the situation is dealt with.

#### **All incidents should be talked through, even with young children.**

The following is a step by step checklist for dealing with specific incidents and may be adapted to the particular circumstances of individual schools.

Acknowledge the incident and express disapproval:-

- Give support to any victim and apologise for the incident.
- Identify the racist behaviour.
- Deal with the perpetrator, including support to change inappropriate behaviour.
- Explain to those responsible as well as to onlookers what is unacceptable about the incident.
- Consider appropriate action and inform the Headteacher or the nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring racist incidents.
- Contact parents. Explain the action which the school has taken, restate the school policy and that of the County Council.
- Review the steps taken, the position of the school towards racist incidents. Amend policies and procedure as necessary.

### **1. Further implications for Headteachers and Governors**

It is important:-

- that the issue of racism is discussed within the school and involves teachers, students, support staff, governors and parents;
- that individual members of staff are aware of their role and responsibility to ensure that the implementation of the policy is effective to ensure that victims feel supported and perpetrators will, in future, realise the consequences of their actions;
- to re-examine all aspects of school curriculum and procedures to ensure that racism is challenged and not inadvertently reinforced.

The Headteacher and/or the governing body may also be required to address:-

- racist behaviour by a member of staff;
- racist behaviour towards a member of staff.