



Oakridge Primary School Equal Opportunities Policy

Adopted:	September 2023
Chair of Leadership and Management Committee:	Mr D Rust
Next review date:	September 2025

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY OBJECTIVES

These objectives have been compiled following engagement activities involving all stakeholders. The accessibility objectives will be evaluated annually and the equality objective will be evaluated after four years.

School equality objectives for 2023-2024

Annual equality objectives are identified at Oakridge Primary School with a clear focus on outcome rather than process. Each year the school will set specific equality targets to improve the provision set out within this policy.

- To increase understanding of equality and diversity through direct teaching across the curriculum through our new PSHE curriculum and the introduction of 'The Oakridge Way'
- Increase the number of children in KS1 taking part in after school sporting clubs
- Increase the progress of PMA boys in reading

Introduction

Oakridge Primary School seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers the nine protected characteristics of **race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender**. Equality and Diversity is more than just meeting legal obligations or targets. It makes a difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual. This means an ongoing commitment to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of children and young people in our school. We will make sure that our employment practices are fair and promote equality. We will actively value the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, locally and nationally. We will prepare children and young people for living in a diverse society with increasing global connections and controversial issues. We will ensure that the principles of this policy are reflected in all our policies, practices, procedures and services and are part of everything we do.

Schools Aims

Equality of opportunity at Oakridge Primary School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

- a) In accordance with Oakridge school values and the Oakridge Way we pledge to:

Respect the equal human rights of all our pupils

Educate them in equality

Respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community

Ensure that all staff and children have the right to be able to fulfil their **aspirations**

Ensure that all staff and children feel safe in our environment and have the right to **enjoy their school life**

Instil the **courage** in the staff and children to stand up and be proud of who they are

b) We will assess our current school practices and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to the nine protected characteristics.

c) We will promote community cohesion at school, local, national and global levels, comparing our school community to its local and national context and implementing all necessary actions in relation to the nine protected characteristics.

We aim to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- Creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- Building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so they can use these qualities to achieve their full potential and become rounded citizens of the wider community;
- Have consistent expectations of the pupils and their learning;
- Removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- Ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our curriculum and lesson planning;
- Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality through our curriculum;
- Making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and discriminatory behaviour;
- Ensuring class and school resources reflect society as a whole;
- Has clear procedures for dealing with discriminatory incidents and that these are understood by all; and
- Ensure all pupils develop mutual respect through the school ethos, teachings and adult example.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all of its community, taking account of the nine protected characteristics; race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

The School's commitment to Equality for All

Under Equality Act 2010, we see it as our duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity

- Ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;
- Respecting and valuing differences between people;
- Preparing pupils for life in a diverse society;
- Acknowledging the existence of discrimination and taking steps to prevent it
- Making the school a place where everyone, irrespective of a protected characteristic, feels welcomed and valued;
- Promoting good relations between groups within the school and the wider community;
- Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- Opposing all forms of discrimination and harassment;

- Being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The School's Ethos

We believe that a greater level of success from pupils and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Creating a prejudice-free environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the school. This environment will be achieved by:

Being respectful.

- Always treating all members of the school community fairly.
- Developing an understanding of diversity and the benefits it can have.
- Adopting an inclusive attitude.
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all.
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness.

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all groups.

The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different groups subject to health and safety regulations.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular diversity and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant LA policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff will go on courses to train them to deal effectively with bullying, discriminatory incidents, harassment and prejudice.

Leadership and Management

- School policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.
- The governing body and the school leadership set a clear ethos that reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.
- The school promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.
- The school leadership will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.
- Governors and Staff contribute to policy documents. Parents can request to see policies and have their views taken note of.

Staffing, Recruitment and Professional Development

- The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures that are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and LA guidelines.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

Staff undertake training and development in relation to equality in terms of professional responsibilities as well as statutory requirements as and when appropriate. This may take the format of staff development meeting updates or full training sessions when needed. All staff are given equal opportunity to take part in staff training and have access to courses appropriate to their professional development and responsibilities as well as statutory requirements.

We do not discriminate against staff with regards to their:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marital or civil partner status.
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex or sexual orientation

Curriculum

We are committed to having a balanced and fair curriculum. We believe that our pupils should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding, to help ensure that pupils learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination and promotes inclusive attitudes. We will also respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from certain classes which pose conflicts to their own beliefs

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated where appropriate to ensure the inclusion of:

- Boys and girls;
- Pupils learning English as an additional language;
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- Pupils who are gifted and talented;
- Pupils with special educational needs;
- Pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- Pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

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.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum.

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender, SEN and social background.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

Assessment, Attainment and Progress

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is as free of gender, cultural and social bias as possible, and that assessment methods are valid.

The school monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, ethnicity, SEN and those entitled to pupil premium and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment that summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-related Bullying

Oakridge Primary School is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of us fulfilling our legal duties. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with in relation to:

- 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

We do not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all members of our school with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported, through our thorough reporting procedure, our school is devoted to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

Our pupils are taught to be:

- Understanding of others
- Celebratory of cultural diversity
- Eager to reach their full potential
- Inclusive
- Aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour

Oakridge employees will not:

- Discriminate against any member of the school community.
- Treat other members of the school community unfairly.

Oakridge employees will:

- Promote diversity and equality.
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude.
- Lead by example.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that having a protected characteristic may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the school's behaviour policy.

Pupils, staff, parents and governors are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour that is damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support takes account of differences, and the experiences and needs of all individuals.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

When operating this policy Oakridge uses the following accepted Governmental definition of extremism which is:

*'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.
use of outdoor education centres. Their strong rooted values-based understanding gives them an excellent platform for embracing difference.*

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our college, whether from internal sources – learners, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals. Our learners see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens. As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for learners and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our learners.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

Therefore, at Oakridge we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our learners are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by learners or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Disciplinary Policy for both learners and staff.

Our school will closely follow any locally agreed procedure as set out by the Local Authority and/or Staffordshire's Safeguarding Children's Boards agreed processes and criteria for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

At Oakridge we will promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We will teach and encourage learners to respect one another and to respect and tolerate difference, especially those of a different faith or no faith. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our learners safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

Admissions and Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admission forms.

The school and families are aware of rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision would be made for leave of absences for religious observance that includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision would be made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Partnership with Parents in the Community

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

Responsibilities

The governing body and headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The governing body and headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The headteacher will ensure that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

Monitoring and Review

In order to set appropriate objectives to impact the improvement in relation to equality at Oakridge, the following data and information is gathered:

- Monitoring and analysis of pupil progress in the identified groups
- Monitoring and evaluation evidence file, SEN files, attendance at clubs including sporting clubs and school representation
- vulnerable pupil information

The evidence is then analysed in order to choose objectives that will:

- Promote equality of opportunity for members of identified groups
- Eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Foster good relations between different groups

[Link to other policies](#)

The School Equality Objectives are carefully chosen in relation to:

- Whole school assessment data
- Implementation of our curriculum
- Embedding of practices e.g. Rights Respecting Schools

The School Equality Policy should be read in conjunction with and not limited to:

- The School Accessibility Plan
- The Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Applicable Risk Assessments