

Single Equality Policy

Aspiring Foundations Federated Nursery Schools are inclusive schools where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. This supports our commitment to being a Nurturing school and the 6 principles.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

1. All learners are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. 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.

5. 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

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all children can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential

7. We work to raise standards for all children, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of children raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against children or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to children.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

We have a number of policies, including this one, which support our intention to eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act:

- SEN and inclusion
- Community Cohesion and promoting British Values
- Children rights and entitlements
- Achieving positive behaviour
- Whistle blowing

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions; the way we provide education for our children and the way we provide access for children to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled children – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled children and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled 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 champions respect for all.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against children by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity

Addressing 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:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and if necessary will take action to reduce incidents

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our school population very well and 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, and outside agencies, to identify children who have a disability or special educational need.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of children and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps.

We collect and analyse data:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of children identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future children. Through liaison with outside agencies, parents and carers and other professionals, we aim to be sufficiently prepared if for example, a Visually Impaired, Hearing impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller child joins our school.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any childrens achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".

We use a range of teaching strategies to ensure that we meet the needs of all children. We make appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities. We acknowledge that children have different learning styles and cater for these accordingly. We have spent time looking at the learning styles of boys and developing our outdoor play area to encourage active learning.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all children to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

We also implement an Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which children with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment; and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled children.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of children with particular protected characteristics. SEND children are tracked via a provision map and an intervention tracking system. Their needs are identified early, Individual support plans are written, and advice from outside agencies is sought and acted upon. If necessary we can apply for extra funding from the LEA and this is carefully monitored through clear action plans.

We provide support to children at risk of underachieving, for example specific small group speech and language support. A bank of resources to support this work has been developed.

We have undergone an Early Childhood Environmental Rating Audit which has supported us in looking at our use of resources to develop an understanding of diversity, disability, gender and age.

Actions taken are designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our children for life in a diverse society, ensuring that the curriculum offered is carefully planned to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as towards people who are different from themselves. We encourage children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking. Policies already identified support with this.

Staff consider the use of resources carefully – to broaden children's experiences and to challenge any misconceptions. This includes play materials, books, posters and pictures.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures. We include the contribution of different cultures, and promote positive images of people, We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, visitors, equipment, whole school events e.g. Children in Need, use of whiteboard technology etc

Other ways we address equality issues

We maintain records of all training relating to equality, and these are reported termly to the Governing Body.

We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well being of our children.

The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaires, 'stay and play' sessions etc
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- analyse issues raised in Child Review meetings or reviews of progress on SEN Support PLans/Personalised Provision Maps,

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Improvement Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This is part of our school development plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, children, governors and parents and carers.

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.

Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

Headteacher and Assistant head

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.

Both the headteacher and the assistant head have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff

All 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 experiences 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 children
- support different groups of children through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find something difficult
- 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 the duties set out in this policy.

Equal Opportunities for staff

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

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.

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.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, children 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.

Promoting Fundamental British Values

As a school we have a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values (first set out in the Government's Prevent Strategy, 2011) of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We are also required "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (the Prevent duty, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015). At Aspiring Foundations Federated Nursery Schools we believe that the fundamental British Values are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage. See Appendix 2 for examples relating to our philosophy.

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate.

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both children and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, and staff training

This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides

The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties

The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need

The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and monitors progress on reaching these objectives

A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes

The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy

The curriculum includes opportunities for all children to understand and celebrate diversity and difference

The school monitors bullying and harassment of children in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern

Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the community

Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions

The school environment is increasingly accessible to children, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment

Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered

The accessibility needs of parents, children and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information

The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves
Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled

Appendix 2 **Examples of The Fundamental British Values and how they link to the EYFS and our philosophy (in conjunction with “The Foundation Years”)**

Democracy: making decisions together

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Staff encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, value each other’s views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate staff demonstrate democracy in action, for example, children sharing views on what the theme of their role play area could be with a show of hands.
- Staff support the decisions that children make (e.g. at planning time) and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration (during both child initiated and adult led activities). Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

Rule of law: understanding rules matter

As cited in Personal Social and Emotional development

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour:

- Staff ensure that children understand their own and others’ behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong. This is outlined in the Achieving Positive Behaviour policy
- Staff can collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, to agree the rules about tidying up and ensure that all children understand rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty: freedom for all

As part of the focus on self-confidence & self-awareness and people & communities as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to manage and take risks within the outdoor area, to investigate their own environment, to plan their own session, to talk about their experiences and learning (as part of their ongoing initiated play as well as at recall time).
- Staff should encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated

As part of the focus on people & communities, managing feelings & behaviour and making relationships as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Senior staff and the wider staff team create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community (see community cohesion policy)
- Children acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.
- Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions.
- Staff promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

We believe that taking a minimum approach, for example having notices on the walls or multi-faith books on the shelves, will fall short of 'actively promoting'.

We believe the following to be unacceptable in actively promoting intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races

- failure to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys
- isolating children from their wider community
- failure to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

