

EQUALITY POLICY

This policy should be read alongside the following Harlyn School policies: Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Race Equality, Special Educational Needs (Inclusion), Gifted & Talented and Behaviour.

1. Mission Statement

At Harlyn, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents/carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which promotes respect for all. At Harlyn, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific action plan (equality and accessibility) set out in the Appendix to this policy, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;

- encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability, faith or religion, or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

3. Equal Opportunities for 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. However, we are concerned to ensure, wherever possible, that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

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.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and when allocating Teaching & Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4. Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2010) which lists 9 protected characteristics it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The action plan in the Appendix of this policy outlines the actions Harlyn Primary will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare an Equality Plan which includes race equality;
- assess the impact of our policies and action plans, on pupils, staff and parents/carers by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of pupils from minority ethnic groups;

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and the Accessibility Plan that follows this policy.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancer sufferers are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities).
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish as part of this policy our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- prepare and publish as part of this policy an Accessibility Plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the two areas of:
 - increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
 - improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish as part of this scheme an Equality Plan which covers our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- review and revise this policy every three years.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion, belief or sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30th April 2007 and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community Cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths/beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1st September 2007.

5. Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents/carers. We will achieve this by using the following to shape the Equality Plan:

- Feedback from the Parent/Carers;
- Discussion at SMT meetings;
- Staff meetings/INSET;
- Feedback from the school council;
- Issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of Support Plans or Personal Education Plans;
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Governors

- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents/carers and pupils.
- The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, gender or disability.

The Role of the Headteacher (and senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policy and Action Plans and is supported by the Governing Body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Scheme and Action Plans and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this scheme, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The Role of all Staff: Teaching and Non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy and Action Plans.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of religion, race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher, phase leader and deputy and headteacher where necessary. Incidents are reported to the headteacher where appropriate and racist incidents are reported to the governing body on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of religion, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks/banter or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

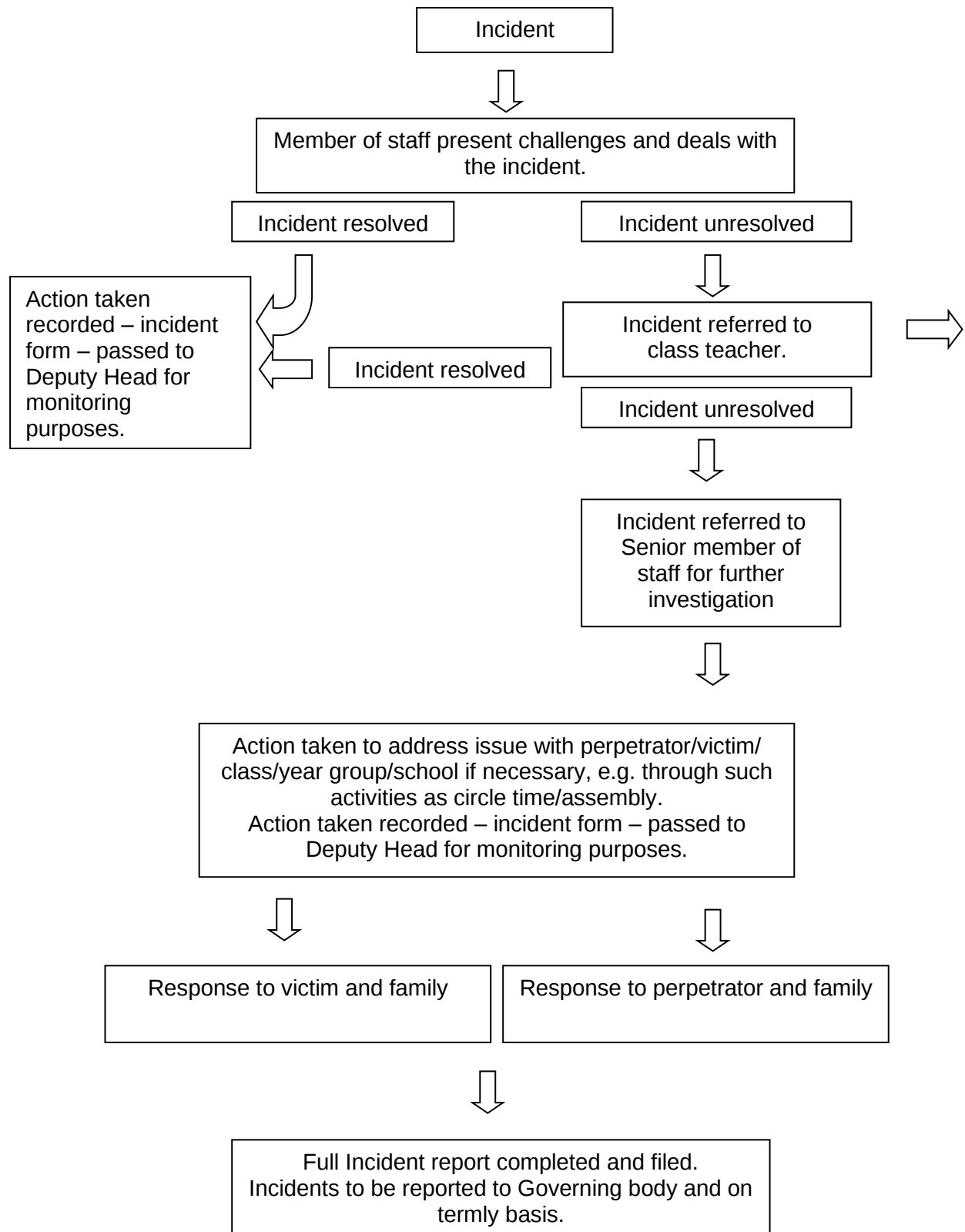
- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes/banter;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation;

- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference, e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



8. Review of Progress and Impact

The Equality Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality and Accessibility Plans annually and review the entire policy and accompanying action plans on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by religion, ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

9. Publishing the Plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish our Equality Policy, Accessibility Plan, we will:

- publish our plan on the school website;
- raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- make copies available in alternative formats where requested.