

ESTCOTS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

Estcots Primary School

Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme

Introduction

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme for Estcots Primary School brings together policies, schemes and action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, meeting the statutory duties in these areas.

We recognise and accept our duties and responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and promote equality, including the requirement to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.

Our statutory duties are contained within:

- The Equality Bill (introduced to the House of Commons in April 2009)
- Equality Act 2006
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Gender Equality Act 2006
- Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001) and Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000

We interpret our Equalities and Community Cohesions duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment. Our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme is inclusive of our whole school community - pupils, students, staff, parents/carers and visitors, who have been involved in and contributed to its development.

Vision

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

Estcots Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequalities, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Scheme Aims:

- To eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of access within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life will organise the scheme using the Five Every Child Matters themes.

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

Through this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and Scheme, the school seeks to ensure that no pupils, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other persons through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers ethnic or national origin, language, religion or belief, gender and gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, responsibility for children or other dependents, trade union or political activities, social class, where the person lives or spent convictions.

Our Approach

We take a whole school approach to Equalities and Community Cohesion. We review and audit the environment, resources, and curriculum and seek to ensure the safety of all members of the school community. We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. We actively seek out opportunities in and outside of the curriculum to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared humanity – underlying our diversity lies commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.
- Valuing difference and diversity – we appreciate the richness of our cultural and social mix and look for ways of celebrating and understanding it better.
- Interdependence, interaction and influence – we recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other.
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Personal and cultural identity – we recognise that most individuals belong to a range of different groups and that some of these may change over time.
- Promoting an understanding of fairness and social justice.
- Equality of access to the curriculum and extra curricular opportunities.
- Excellence – we aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement in our communities.

Policy Outcomes

We seek to achieve the following outcomes:

- Raise attainment and close the achievement gap within a school where there are high expectations of all pupils/students who are supported to reach their potential. Pupils from all groups have high levels of attainment and rates of progress.

Roles and Responsibilities within our school community

Our Head teacher will:

- Ensure that governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are informed about the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme and that it is made available to all
- Produce regular information for staff and governors about the scheme and ensure all are clear about their responsibilities
- Oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- Ensure staff and governors have access to training to implement the scheme
- Develop partnerships with external agencies so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- Monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually, on its effectiveness.
- Ensure that the Senior Leadership Team are kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- In partnership with governors deal with breaches of this policy in the same way breaches of other school policies are dealt with

Our Governing Body will:

- Fulfil its statutory duty to promote community cohesion
- Designate a governor with specific responsibility for the single equality and community cohesion scheme (or have governors with responsibility for specific strands of this agenda)
- Ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are cross-referenced in the school improvement plan
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- Inform and consult with parents/carers and the wider community about the scheme
- Evaluate and review this scheme regularly
- Ensure the school complies with all current equality legislation

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Have general responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this scheme
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme
- With the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues

- Assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the School Improvement Plan

Our Parents/Carers will:

- Be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the ongoing development of the scheme
- Have access to the scheme through a range of different media and languages appropriate to their requirements
- Be encouraged to actively support the scheme
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the scheme
- Be informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child

Our School Staff will:

- Be involved in the ongoing development of the scheme
- Be fully aware of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme and how it relates to them
- Understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme
- Model good practice by recognising and challenging prejudice and stereotyping
- Promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class
- Keep up to date with the law on discrimination and take training and learning opportunities
- Accurately and swiftly respond to and report any equalities incidents
- Be familiar with the process for reporting racist or religiously motivated incidents

Pupils will:

- Be involved in the ongoing development of the scheme and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- Be expected to act in accordance with the scheme
- Keep equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda and support policy development in this area

Visitors, contractors and those requesting to rent our premises will:

- Be required to know and support our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Scheme

Religious Observance

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

Responding to equalities related incidents or situations

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We recognise that there are differences between the various equalities strands but we also understand the similarities between each strand both from the target's perspective. We seek to recognise, record and respond to any prejudice driven incident.

We have a legal obligation to collate and report racist and religiously motivated incidents (RRMI). We use this information and other data (such as records of bullying incidents) to identify trends and patterns and we have mechanisms in place to provide support for the targets and their families and to manage and change the behaviour of the perpetrator(s). We will also record and monitor incidents relating to the other various equalities strands and provide appropriate responses in terms of support for targets (and their families), teaching and learning, sanctions and support for perpetrators and working in partnership with colleagues from other agencies.

When appropriate we will complete the local authority Racist Incident/Hate Crime Report Form to enable support for people targeted and to inform monitoring across the city of incidents.

In the case of serious incidents we will inform and involve the Police.

Support for pupils

There are a number of support networks available to pupils in school including:

- Inclusion Team
- Learning Mentor
- Play Therapist
- Looked after Children Co-ordinator
- Child Protection Officer
- School Council representatives

Staff development, training and support

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.

Human Resources

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Commissioned services (procurement)

We are increasingly directly responsible for the purchase of some goods and services such as maintenance, cleaning and security and ensure that equalities issues are given full regard.

When procuring goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equalities issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment or to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equalities requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equalities policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

Admissions

For all state maintained community schools the Local Authority is the admissions body. Local authorities must not discriminate against pupils in admissions or in their day to day operations, such as in the allocation of pupils to particular classes with the following exception:

- Schools may treat disabled pupils more favourably than others if it prevents them being at a disadvantage

How we developed our scheme

The development of this scheme has involved the whole of our school community, including:

Pupils

- School Council promotes pupil voice
- PSHE Education and Citizenship education
- Learning Mentor

Staff and Governors

- Staff meetings
- Governor meetings

Parents and Carers

- Newsletters
- Questionnaires
- Parents Forums
- Parent Consultation Evenings
- Website
- Home/School agreements

Partners in the community

- Sackville
- Local Support Services

How we identify actions and prioritise them

We know our school well because we regularly collect information to complete the Self Evaluation Framework (SEF). We are constantly monitoring the make up and needs of our staff and pupils and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

The Local Authority and EGGS group helps to provide us with a range of services which support the equalities agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We have good links with our local and wider community including:

- Healthy Schools Team
- Education Welfare
- Extended Services
- Behaviour and Attendance Team
- School Nurse
- Social Care

Monitoring and Reviewing

Monitoring is the responsibility of our SLT and our Governors and will take place every 3 years.