



Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery

Equalities Policy

Name/Title of responsible committee/individual:		Full Governing Body
Date issued:		September 2023
Review frequency:		Annually
Target audience:		All stakeholders

The Governing Body shall conduct the School with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

The School will promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect towards those with different faiths and beliefs and will actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

Version	Date	Notes
V1.0	Oct 17	Approved by Full Governing Body
V1.1	January 19	Change to job title
V1.2	March 2022	Review Frequency from 3 years to annually Statements in first paragraph Removal of wording 'Tolerance' To make clear definitions Further detail to Action Plan
V1.3	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims • Legislation and guidance – explicit legal guidance • Eliminating discrimination – explicit legal guidance • 9 areas added – to make it clear to staff and governors about these specific areas, linked to staff voice • Objectives reviewed and updated

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)

There are 9 areas of possible discrimination (also known as protected characteristics):

- Disability
- Ethnicity and Race
- Gender (sex)
- Gender identity and reassignment
- Pregnancy, Maternity and Breastfeeding
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to simplify, strengthen and harmonise previous acts in order to help tackle discrimination and provide a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. It tackles discrimination and disadvantage.

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011. It is sometimes referred to as the 'General Duty.' It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against staff, a pupil or prospective pupil and in some limited circumstances, former pupils by treating them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity.

The General Duty

Schools have a general duty to promote equality and certain specific duties. The equality duty consists of a general equality duty with three main aims those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The three key terms in the public sector duty – “discrimination”, “equality of opportunity” and “good relations.”

The underlying principle is that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. The legislation requires that account should be taken of people’s differing experiences, needs and histories, and of the differing challenges and barriers which they may face. It involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The Act also explains that “having due regard to the need to foster good relations” involves, in particular, bearing in mind “the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding”. This clearly has implications for the curriculum and organisation of schools, and for the duty of schools to promote community cohesion.

3. School Context

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery is a two form entry mainstream infant and nursery school with the capacity for 240 children. We have an average mix of boys and girls and draw from a range of cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds. At Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us. We take seriously our role in modelling positive behaviour and challenging negative attitudes related to race and utilise every opportunity to teach our pupils respect.

At Merry Hill we are committed to ensuring the equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, belief or socio-economic background. We aim to deliver a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life. Our commitment to this aim is apparent in our school development towards the Anti-Racist School award.

This policy sets out the school's approach to promoting equality, as defined in the Equality Act (2010). This act replaced all existing legislation such as the Race Relations Act, The Disability Discrimination Act and The Sex Discrimination Act.

What do we mean by equality and diversity?

Equality refers to outcomes, making sure that all social groups benefit from our activities. Diversity recognises that we can only achieve equality by taking into account the different needs of people and communities. Equality is impossible to achieve without recognising diversity.

Definitions

Equity: taking the range of human attributes and qualities into account and providing each individual with what they need to be successful.

Equality: providing each individual with the same or similar opportunities and ensuring fairness in processes and outcomes so that each individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their abilities.

Diversity: the range of human differences, including diverse talents, perspectives, backgrounds, worldviews, ways of knowing, skills, and abilities.

Inclusion: ongoing practice of embracing equity, diversity, and taking action to create a supportive and welcoming environment.

Belonging: when each individual is supported, respected, and valued for their identity and unique traits that make them different from each other. Belonging is feeling part of a collective that is co-created by diverse individuals in our community.

Human Dignity: right to be safe, valued, respected, and treated ethically.

4. How does Merry Hill Eliminate Discrimination?

Merry Hill is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of challenging discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example, during meetings.

New staff receive STEPS training, which involves aspects of the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training annually.

SLT monitors equality issues, particularly through the analysis and monitoring of CPOMS which is then shared with our equality link governors (Dr Daniel Ruddock and Mr Donald Barrell)

SLT monitors achievement and exclusions and reports to equality link governors to ensure there is no ethnic disproportionality in these key life outcome areas.

5. How does Merry Hill Advance Equality of Opportunity?

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g pupils with disabilities)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils and staff to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils from a range of cultural backgrounds as well as children with SEN and disabilities, to be involved in the full range of school clubs and little leaders groups)
- Providing direct and active support where identified to ensure all pupils can participate in the full range of in school and after school activities without barriers

6. How does Merry Hill Foster Good Relations?

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting acceptance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures or through Art and Design, learning about artists from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute e.g As part of our ongoing celebration of Black History, Dr Daniel Ruddock delivered an assembly teaching the children about influential black people who have helped positively shape our society
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities to learn about the variety of cultural, ethnic and religious communities based around the local community (e.g High Holy Days Assembly – Rabbi Yosef Sharfstein, Harvest Festival – Father Andrew Burton, St Peter’s, Diwali assembly – led by Mrs Chavda and Mrs Mash)
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school’s activities, such as school clubs
- Working with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures, particularly through our newsletter Merry Hill Matters
- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach
- Maintaining the practice of logging racist incidents under CPOMs. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children in our school with protected characteristics, e.g. racial bullying. We will also monitor and log bullying incidents, particularly those directed towards those with special educational needs. We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all
- Enhancing a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the world communities
- Supporting 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. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able

to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community

7. Equality considerations in decision-making at Merry Hill

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for all genders
- Considers accessibility for all

The school will ensure that all pupils have access to after school clubs by supporting those families who cannot afford the fees.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the Merry Hill community champion the responsibility for creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

The community is accountable to:

- Foster a culture that embraces diversity and promotes equity, inclusion and belonging
- Acknowledge and address the biases, underlying beliefs and values, assumptions, and stereotypes that inhibit opportunity in learning and working environments
- Welcome, embrace, and foster positive, informed and inclusive attitudes towards each other
- Provide environments that are anti- discrimination and harassment, and inclusive of all individuals
- Ensure the inclusion of perspectives and voices of underrepresented groups in any decision-making

Merry Hill staff are accountable to:

- Develop a curriculum, and practices that support equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and have a positive impact in the broader community
- Review all materials used in and out of the classroom (texts, documents, publications) to ensure the use of inclusive and anti-discriminatory language and images reflect social and cultural diversity
- Provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment and resources within them
- Create and sustain a welcoming environment in their classroom and around the school that reflects social and cultural diversity through signage, art, texts, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols

Merry Hill Governors and Senior Leaders are accountable to:

- Model the way for our Merry Hill community by demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community
- Critically review the schools structures, systems, policies and procedures, and processes to address disadvantage and underrepresentation
- Critically review documents, publications, and other works to ensure the use of inclusive and anti-discriminatory language and images that reflect social and cultural diversity
- Provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment and resources within them
- Create and sustain a welcoming environment in common spaces that reflects social and cultural diversity through signage, art, texts, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols

Monitoring, evaluation and review carried out by the Senior Leadership Team and in collaboration with our Governors will ensure that procedures and practices within the school reflect the objectives of this policy.

Parents and governors will be involved and consulted about the provision being offered by the school. Teachers will ensure that the teaching and learning takes account of this policy.

Professional development opportunities will be provided for staff and governors to provide them with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to meet the requirements of this policy. Contributions will be sought from parents and others to enrich teaching, learning and the curriculum. The positive achievements of all pupils will be celebrated and recognised.

9. Equality Objectives

Below are our specific measurable objectives which further the aims of the equality duty. We regularly review our equality objectives and a formal review takes place annually.

Priority issue and background	Diversity Strand / Category	Target Task	Success Indicator /Outcome	Monitored by
<p>Equal levels of attainment and progress in all curriculum areas</p> <p><i>The school has analysed data at the end of every key stage and found discrepancies between girls and boys attainment, particularly within maths where boys consistently outperformed the girls. Previous years' data has shown girls' attainment is higher than boys'.</i></p>	<p>National Indicator</p> <p>Gender</p>	<p>To ensure all children are given opportunities to succeed in all areas of the curriculum by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditing reading materials to ensure they are suitable for both boys and girls. • Ensuring learning is accessible for all by planning engagement opportunities based on our most <i>vulnerable pupils</i> • Organising events and activities to engage girls' interest in Maths. • Monitoring gender attainment and progress on a termly basis to ensure all children's needs are met then carrying out further drop ins and pupil led book study to ascertain next steps when gaps arise 	<p>Progress and attainment between boys/girls will be in-line by the end of each academic year</p> <p>All stakeholders will be aware of progress towards reducing any gender achievement differences</p>	<p>Staff / SLT / GB</p>
<p>Community Involvement to be developed across the school and to be representative of the community's growing diversity</p> <p><i>Community involvement is excellent at Merry Hill however we will develop a more multi ethnic approach in all</i></p>	<p>Ethnicity and Race</p> <p>Community Cohesion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speakers from different faiths and cultures to visit the school to speak to the children – one assembly per week dedicated to culture/faith groups • Community events, consortium events will be held at school. 	<p>The number of speakers who visit the school from different faiths and cultures will increase and pupil voice will demonstrate that our children's cultural capital has deepened</p>	<p>Staff / SLT / GB</p>

<p><i>areas of school life to reflect and celebrate our growing diversity.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly newsletter and blogs to promote and celebrate our diverse community • Further develop our use of online tools to involve parents/carers in their child's learning and to gather parental voice and feedback • Re-establish community involvement e.g come and read with me, celebrating success, open evenings, assemblies • Create opportunities for our children to learn directly from people and groups who have specialist knowledge and/or direct experience of protected characteristics from the Equality Act in order to promote increased understanding and respect. 		
<p>Policy review to be systematic and have a focus on equality To ensure policy review involves all stakeholders which will enhance everybody's understanding of equality at Merry Hill and raise the profile of Equality amongst the community. This will support our work towards the anti-racism award.</p>	<p>Statutory All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GB will produce a schedule of review for all policies • GB will appoint a member with responsibility for monitoring equality and diversity • Involve parents and pupils with disabilities as well as staff in consultation annually • Use questionnaires annually for all stakeholders • Feedback from all questionnaires to be analysed by SLT and shared with governors. • School to provide laptops for parents to use at open evenings and other 	<p>All policies will be systematically reviewed and reflective of the needs and views of all stakeholders.</p> <p>Merry Hill will hold the Leeds Beckett University 'Anti-Racist Award'</p>	<p>GB / SLT /Staff</p>

		<p>school events to ensure all parents have the opportunity to record their opinions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents to complete evaluation forms after all curricular workshops. • Children with additional needs will be able to record their views in other ways 		
<p>Ensure that the curriculum (national and wider) is diverse, inclusive and decolonised so that all children are represented and included in school life and are well prepared for life in 21st Century Britain</p>	<p>Race Gender Religion Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that images, posters and displays across the school are diverse and celebrate how we are all different. • Seek out materials/resources that reflect the diversity of our school and wider community without stereotyping • Library refurbishment – include purchase of high quality books that support the delivery of a diverse and equitable curriculum and promote a love of reading 	<p>All classrooms, displays across the school and texts within the school will promote diversity.</p>	<p>GB / SLT /Staff</p>
<p>The attendance of all pupils will be high, regardless of ethnicity</p>	<p>Ethnicity and race</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLT will monitor the attendance of children from black and minority ethnic groups and present this information to governors on a termly basis through the HT report. • Any child whose attendance falls below 90% will be contacted by the school and, if appropriate, a plan for improved attendance will be put in place 	<p>All children will have high rates of attendance, regardless of ethnicity</p>	<p>On-going</p>

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the review schedule.

11. Linked Policies and Documents

To be read with:

Accessibility plan

SEND policy

Behaviour Policy

Inclusion

School Development Plan

Pupil Premium Strategy