

Pear Tree School

Single Equalities Policy

The Equality Act 2010 has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality. The primary purpose of the legislation is to bring together existing equalities legislation.

The Act imposes equality duties in respect of the following:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Single Equalities Policy is intended to replace/cover the following:

- Race Equality Policy and Action Plan
- Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan including Accessibility Plan (see Appendix)
- Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy including:
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Age
 - Religion or Belief
- A strategy for promoting community relations

Statement of Principles

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of Pear Tree School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school and wider community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The Governing Body

- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Volunteers and Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school, centre and wider community. Every member of the community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Pear Tree School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential – irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Our arrangements for access to services are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

We are committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body/advisory board that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respond to the diverse needs of our population.

We aim to provide all our service users with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of achievement. The progress of children will be monitored – where appropriate – by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support children, raise standards and ensure inclusive services.

We pride ourselves on the fact that Pear Tree is a genuinely inclusive community. Our motto, which is ...'Achieving the best we can in everything we do' applies to everyone involved with the community. We provide an individualised programme of learning in which pupil's needs are met in a personalised way. Pear Tree provides an inclusive communication environment to ensure that everyone has full access to all aspects of school life and feels included in everything we do.

School Context

Lancashire is a large county with a diverse population and Pear Tree has pupils from across the region. The school population is predominantly white British, with 10 families from minority ethnic groups.

Pear Tree is a community special school for pupils aged 2 -19 with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties.. We also have pupils with ASD and with complex health needs. Although the majority of pupils are boys and the majority of staff are female, every opportunity is taken to provide suitable role models.

The school is fully accessible for people with a range of disabilities. A hydrotherapy pool is available for use by pupils and the community.

The school now hosts the Compass Centre – an intensive support centre for those pupils with autism, complex learning needs and challenging behaviour. It can support up to 12 young people whose needs can not be met in other Lancashire Special Schools.

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At Pear Tree School, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community
- We are proud that we receive so many comments about how welcoming our school community is.
- We value our inclusive communication environment to ensure full access to all aspects of school life
- We recognise the importance of a peer group and role models in developing a positive self-identity
- Respecting and valuing diversity demonstrates our commitment to promoting community cohesion and is reflected in multi-cultural provision, curriculum activities and extended services.
- All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions
- All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school and centre with friendliness and respect
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities
- We have strong links with the local community including children's centres, partner mainstream schools, pre-schools, workplace providers, local colleges and local businesses

Policy Development

This policy applies to the whole school community. We involved pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers, and our wider school community in creating this policy and action plan, either directly with the school/centre community or through previous policy documents that have contributed to this development. This helped to ensure that the views of potentially disadvantaged groups were fully incorporated.

Examples include:

- Discussions at School Council/Circle Time
- Contact with parent/carers (meetings, Home/School Books, questionnaires, coffee mornings)

- Staff Meetings
- Working parties e.g. disability equality scheme
- Discussions at governing body committees
- Discussions within cluster groups
- Parent Workshops
- Local authority – SEN/Inclusion Adviser

Other School Policies

We have used our previous school policies to inform our Single Equalities Policy. These include:

- Equal Opportunities Policy*
- School Development & Improvement Plan
- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Accessibility Plan*
- Disability Equality Scheme*
- Racial Equality Policy*
- Gender Policy*
- Behaviour Policy
- SEN Policy
- Language and Communication Policy
- Community Cohesion
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Policies have been replaced and incorporated into this Single Equalities Policy*

Monitoring and Review

Pear Tree School is an inclusive school. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary.

Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information.

Information Gathering (Pupils).

Areas for analysis with regard to equality information include:

- Pupil progress data
- Attendance levels
- % of individual targets achieved
- Incidents of restrictive physical intervention (RPI)
- Exclusions
- Attendance at external provision Extended School activities/extra-curricular activities
- Complaints of bullying and harassment
- Racist incidents
- Participation in Student Council
- Pupil contributions to annual review
- Participation of pupils not well enough to attend school
- Evidence of narrowing the gap
- Frequency of serious incidents

Issues identified from the above are prioritised over the three year life span of the scheme and are included in the Action Plan.

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

Staff

The school is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of our population.

We collect and analyse the following information for our staff and governors:

- Applicants for employment
- Staff profile
- Staff attendance
- Attendance on staff training events
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Staff Appraisals/performance management

The information gathered is treated confidentially and any issues identified from the above are prioritised over the three year life span of our scheme and are included in the Action Plan.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School/Centre Improvement Plan. The persons responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and action plan are Kate Walker and Rebecca Warnock.

Their role is...

- Lead discussions, organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions
- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

Developing Best Practice

Learning and Teaching

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

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use communication methods best suited to individual needs i.e. objects of reference, symbols, PECS, signing, Alternative Augmentative Communication and speech in whatever combination works best for each child
- Provide an inclusive communication environment in which staff must ensure that communication is accessible to everyone so that pupils can benefit from opportunities for incidental learning in addition to an appropriate style of curriculum delivery
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity and includes individual communication targets and an inclusion programme
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

Learning Environment

There are consistently high expectations of all pupils regardless of their communication needs, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other

recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

Our school motto is...

'Achieving the best we can in everything we do'

- Staff enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good outcomes from all pupils
- Adults in the school provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- We meet all pupils' learning needs by carefully assessed, differentiated and administered programmes of work
- The school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- Consideration is given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

Curriculum

At Pear Tree School, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All pupils have access to assessment which recognises attainment and achievement and promotes progression
- Personalised timetables ensure barriers to learning are removed for all pupils

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Pear Tree School and centre is a high priority. We acknowledge that ICT is a powerful tool and endeavour to maximise its potential through continued investment in resources. We provide specialist equipment and materials designed for pupils with a wide range of learning needs.

Resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society and sign language users
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints

- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community

Language

We recognise the importance of all members of the school community using appropriate language which:

- Takes account of individual communication needs
- Affords equal status to all languages – signing, symbols, spoken language, English, home languages etc.
- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age.

We undertake responsibility for making contributions to extended learning opportunities and are aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coach drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy.

We try to ensure that all such non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils

We undertake appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners
- Use first language effectively for learning

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Staff take account of SEN, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as the deaf community, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils

- All pupils are helped and encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations)
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- This must include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible
- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds

Staff Recruitment

- 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

Note:

Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role.

In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational qualification on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be permissible, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

We will work with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential.

- Pear Tree was one of the first schools to achieve the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
- Pear Tree is open to the community all year round (except Christmas) for childcare, respite
- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Setting up, as part of the schools' commitment to equality and diversity, a group made up of all stakeholders of the school community. This has been developed to support the school with matters related to its equalities duties
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities

Roles and Responsibilities

- Our governing body will ensure that the school and centre complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan
- The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body
- The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school and centre, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other and staff with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour
- We take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality

Commissioning and Procurement

Pear Tree School ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

The Measurement of Impact of the Policy

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

Publishing the Policy and Plan

This policy is a public document that should be made available to any interested stakeholder. The policy is published on our website peartreeschool.co.uk

Annual Review of Progress

We have been legally required to report annually on progress and performance in respect of policy covering ethnicity, disability and gender and to report annually on progress to improve access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information.

Taking this single equality approach we will incorporate all requirements into one annual report which meets the requirements of the new legislation and which will formulate the basis for the annual action plan.

The policy has a life span of 3 years and must therefore be reviewed and revised as part of a 3 year cycle.

The Action Plan is included with other improvement plans in the School Development Plan.

Equality Impact Assessments

Undertaking equality impact assessments (EIAs) is similar to undertaking health and safety risk assessments. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, function or strategy will be on a wide range of people.

EIAs were introduced with the Race Equality Duty and are now also required for both disability and gender. It is also best practice to consider age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation as part of this process.

EIAs are a way in which we can analyse all of our work (this could be a policy, procedure, project, strategy or service) to ensure it meets the needs of all our service users and that no group (in relation to ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation) is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.

Appendix – Equality Legislation Guidance

What does a school need to do?

(Note: The duties outlined below are now elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty)

RACE

The term race includes colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and citizenship as well as race.

The Race Equality Duty

What is it?

- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (which includes the Race Equality Duty) amended the Race Relations Act 1976
- It came into effect from April 2001

Who is covered?

- Pupils, parents/carers, prospective pupils and parents/carers, staff, job applicants, governors and others using school facilities

General duties

- Tackle racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between persons of different racial groups

Specific duties

- From May 2002 publish a Race Equality Policy which includes an implementation strategy or action plan (effectively a Race Equality Scheme), monitor it annually and review it every three years
- Involve appropriate and diverse stakeholders in developing the policy
- Monitoring the impact of the school's policies on pupils' performance and progress
- Provide ethnic monitoring data on their staff in regular returns to the Local Authority

Reporting racist incidents in schools

Schools are required to have in place a procedure for dealing with and reporting racist incidents, which includes providing an annual summary of racist incidents to Lancashire County Council.

DISABILITY

What is a disability?

Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

That effect must be:

- substantial (more than minor or trivial)
- adverse
- long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

There is no need for a person to have a specific, medically-diagnosed cause for their impairment – what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause.

Examples include hearing or sight impairments, a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties. There are many other types of condition, illness or injury that can result in a person being *disabled* (eg diabetes, asthma, cancer, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions, facial disfigurement).

General duties

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
- Take steps to take into account people's disabilities.

Specific duties

- From December 2006 for secondary schools and from December 2007 for primary schools, special schools and PRUs, must prepare and publish a disability equality scheme, monitor it annually and review it every three years
- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme

Set out in their scheme:

- how disabled people have been involved in its preparation
- their arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the school's policies on:
 - the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
 - the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils
 - the school's methods for assessing the impact of its current or proposed policies and practices on disability equality
 - the steps the school is going to take to meet the general duty (the school's action plan)
 - the arrangements for using information to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes.

GENDER

The term gender includes boys, girls, men and women, and transgender/transsexual people. Sexual orientation is a distinct protected characteristic. (The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender).

What is the difference between sex and gender?

- Sex refers to biological status as male or female. It includes physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia.
- Gender is a term that is often used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. While aspects of biological sex are the same across different cultures, aspects of gender may not be.

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexism is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) or are perceived to be so. It is based on the assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as **homophobia**, although **lesophobia** and **biphobia** are also coming into use.

Whether through institutional practice or personal behaviour, the prevalence of heterosexism is likely to mean that LGBT people feel excluded and unsafe. This effect can be mitigated by an actively welcoming and supportive environment.

Sexual orientation is defined as an individual's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as her or him (gay or lesbian), people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or people of both sexes (bisexual).

General duties

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between male and female pupils and between men and women
- Promote good relations

Specific duties

- From April 2007, prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme, showing how the school will meet its general and specific duties and set out its gender equality objectives, as well as its plans for stakeholder consultation and impact assessment
- Monitor the scheme annually and review it every three years.

Transgenderism and gender re-assignment

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. Gender re-assignment is the process a transgender person goes through to change sex.