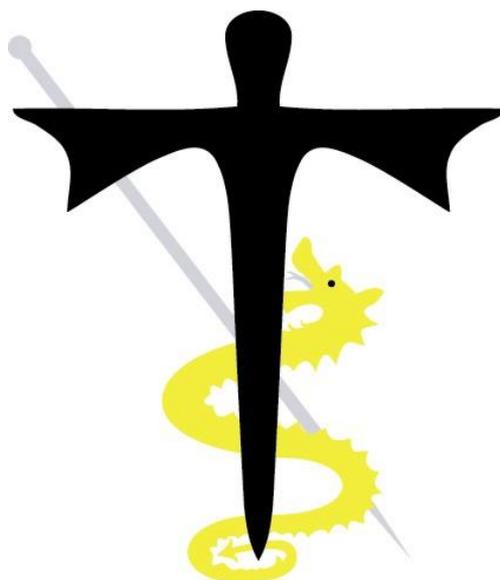


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Ditchling (St. Margaret's) CE Primary School  
**Equality Policy**

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**June 2015**



| Version | Reviewed by         | Approved by         | Date Approved | Next Review Date |
|---------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1       | Headteacher/<br>FGB | Headteacher/<br>FGB | 23.06.15      | Summer 2018      |

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chair of Governors**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Headteacher**



# Ditchling (St. Margaret's) CE Primary School

## Equality Policy

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### **Why we have developed this Equality Policy**

This Equality Policy for Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes. The school Behaviour Management Guidance links into the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In preparing this policy we have used information contained in our school prospectus, School Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, School Improvement Plan and Self Evaluation Plan.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### **Our school within the wider context**

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Our school draws its pupils from Ditchling and the neighbouring towns and villages.

Compared to all schools nationally, we fall in the

1<sup>st</sup> Quintile for children entitled to free school meals.

1<sup>st</sup> Quintile for children with Education, Health, Care, Plans. (EHCP's).

3<sup>rd</sup> Quintile for children supported by in-school support

## **Overall aims of our Equality Policy**

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

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes<sup>1</sup>.

Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

## **Our approach**

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 to embrace the following key concepts:**

- **Shared Humanity.** Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- **Valuing difference and diversity.** We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them 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**
- **Excellence.** We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- **Personal and cultural identity.** We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- **Fairness and social justice.** We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Our school community is committed to excellence in all aspects of its activity.

We teach the children to value learning, fulfil their potential and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to achieve further success in life. At the heart of this is an effective partnership between children, staff, parents and governors grounded of Christian values.

## **Our vision statement about Equality**

Ditchling (St Margaret's) school seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, 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 to 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.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

## **Our duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all<sup>2</sup>. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under an EHCP or where the EHCP does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup>.

**We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.**

**These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.**

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or Theatre in Education (TIE).
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

## **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy

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<sup>2</sup> See *Appendix A* for further information about legislation

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP.

Our pupils/students will:

Through class discussion and the school council:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy.

Our parents/carers will:

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

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy
- Be encouraged to support the Policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.

## **How we developed our Policy - Participation and Involvement**

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our school community. We've involved and listened to what they have to say, including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010.

- Our pupils/students

Pupils' views were accessed through meetings with the Class representatives through the School Council.

- Our staff

Our staff were consulted through a focussed staff meeting held to discuss the Equalities Policy in School.

- Our school governors

School Governors have been informed and have contributed during the development of the policy.

- Parents/carers

Parents and carers were consulted by asking them all to complete a questionnaire which both informed them of the developing policy and asked them for their views on a number of relevant issues. The results of the questionnaire have been used in support of any necessary future action, and will contribute to the next School Improvement Plan, where appropriate.

- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups

Children with particular needs have been considered throughout the development of the Policy, through the parent's questionnaire, and focussed observation and discussion with relevant children and those working with them.

- Ongoing:

The parents / carers questionnaire will be repeated on a regular basis, and the Policy would be reviewed every three years basis or if there is a significant change within the school.

## **How we developed our Policy - Using information**

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community as described above. It has been drawn up as a result of consultation with teaching and support staff, parents, governors and pupil representation through the School Council.

OfSTED inspectors visit us and report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. There has been governor representation on the Rights Respecting Schools Initiative.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community through the Church and the monthly village coffee morning and our liaison with the Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school. By listening to those within our community, and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

## **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. 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. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made<sup>4</sup> or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff are taken seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

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.

Governors have undertaken training to ensure they effectively evaluate the equality practices of the school

This will be reviewed every three years to identify any training needs to keep abreast of current legislation.

## **Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice – based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

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<sup>4</sup> Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work – for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capabilities to carry out the duties.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying following ESCC procedures. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

### **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy was first published in June 2015. It will be actively promoted and disseminated.

The Governors and staff will be aware of the policy publication, and subsequent revisions.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

### **Equality Objectives**

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff and community and analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed and published every 4 years.

### Appendix A: Key legislation

| <b>Area</b>        | <b>Legislation</b>   |
|--------------------|--|
| Age                | Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006   |
| Disability         | Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005 |
| Gender             | Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006 Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999                      |
| Race               | Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations Amendment Act 2000  |
| Religion or belief | Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006  |
| Sexual orientation | Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006 All equality strands Equalities Bill             |

### Race

### Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

General duties:

- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote good relations between people of different racial groups
- To prepare a written race equalities policy

- To implement the policy
- To monitor and evaluate the policy's impact

### Disability

#### Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the SEN framework set out in the Education Act 1996, and extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 to cover the provision of education. Since 2002, three sets of duties have combined to provide the statutory framework that underpins equality of opportunity for disabled pupils in accessing school education. The duties around discrimination, planning, SEN and promotion of equalities combine to provide the statutory framework underpinning equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Funding is available to help schools comply with accessibility and planning.

#### General duties:

- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- To encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- To take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

#### Specific duties:

- To prepare and publish a disability equality scheme
- To involve disabled people in the development of a scheme
- To implement the scheme
- To report on the scheme annually
- To review the scheme every three years
- To develop an accessibility plan Accessibility planning Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into the Disability Equality Scheme.

#### Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.

### Community Cohesion

#### Education and Inspection Act 2006

#### General duty:

- To promote community cohesion Specific duties
- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

### Gender

#### Equality Act 2006

#### General duties:

- To take action to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination between men and women
- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women including transgender people.

Specific duties:

- To publish a gender equalities scheme with agreed gender equalities action
- To ensure equal pay by gender
- To gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality
- To consult stakeholders and use that information to identify objectives
- To implement identified actions within three years and to report annually on the scheme

### Sexual orientation

#### The Equality Act 2006 (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The regulations make it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their sexual orientation:

- In the terms on which it offers to admit him or her as a pupil or to accept him or her as a member of staff
- By refusing to accept an application either to admit him or her as a pupil or as a member of staff
- In the way in which any member of the school community is afforded access to any benefit, facility or service
- By refusing access to any benefit, facility or service
- By excluding, suspending or dismissing him or her
- By subjecting him or her to any other detriment

Discrimination is unlawful in civil law rather than being an offence.

### Religion or Belief

#### The Equality Act 2006 Part 2: Discrimination on Grounds of Religion or Belief

The Act provides that schools (unless in relation to certain exempted areas which are expanded on in Appendix D) will not be allowed to admit or refuse to admit pupils on the basis of religion or belief; and must treat pupils equally, irrespective of their own or their parents' religion or belief or lack of it. Furthermore, the Act makes illegal either direct discrimination (by treating a person less favourably on the grounds of their religion or belief) or indirect discrimination through the application of a provision, criterion or practice which, although it is applied equally to everybody, puts people of a particular religion or belief at a disadvantage. These regulations apply to both adults and young people within the school community. To enable faith schools to continue to operate in accordance with their particular religious ethos, limited exceptions to the non-discrimination provisions have been introduced. There are also exemptions relating to the curriculum and collective worship. Go to [www.governor.net.co.uk](http://www.governor.net.co.uk) for more detail, including examples of best practice.

### Age

#### The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The Regulations came into force on 1 October 2006 and provide protection for all age groups: young, old and middle-aged. They provide four key areas of protection: direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

**Direct Age Discrimination:** This amounts to less favourable treatment on the grounds of an individual's age, which can be a person's actual or perceived age.

**Indirect Age Discrimination:** The Regulations protect those who suffer from discrimination as a result of the application of a criteria, policy rule or practice, which although applied to all employees, has the effect of disadvantaging people of a particular age. An example here is the criminal statement that an applicant must have 15 years' experience, which disadvantages younger people.

Harassment and Victimisation: In addition to compliance with these regulations, schools can support their duty to promote community cohesion by ensuring that volunteers and visitors (including those invited to enrich the curriculum) are representative of all ages, 15 including older people. They should ensure that all parents/carers and visitors are aware of and able to uphold the school's equal opportunities.