



THURLSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2022- 2025

Rationale

This statement reflects the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and non-statutory guidance set out by the government in December 2011 and March 2012. Part One sets out the school's legal duties whilst Part Two contains the school's aims to promote equality of opportunity and to comply with the Act. Part Three is a statement of the School's Equality Objectives.

Part One: Our Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics).

Protected Characteristics

The Act defines protected characteristics as follows:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age and marriage and civil partnerships

These protected characteristics apply to pupils, prospective pupils, staff, prospective staff or anybody they are associated with, with the exception of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnership' which do not apply to pupils and prospective pupils. (See annex A)

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two 'Specific Duties':

The Public Sector Equality Duty or 'general duty'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to give due regard to the need to (in relation to the protected characteristics above):

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Unlawful behaviour

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour-direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

i) Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat-or would treat-other people.

ii) Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

iii) Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act- it is "Unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person".

iv) Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act.

2. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

Discrimination arising from disability- treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments. The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act. This means that we are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans

In common with all other schools, Thurlstone Primary School is required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services
- Provide information in an accessible format
- Develop and implement (by allocation of resources) Accessibility Plans which will;

1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum

And for all users of the school:

2. Improve and maintain the quality of the physical environment

3. Improve and maintain the quality of the provision of information

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that Thurlstone Primary School owes to all pupils with disabilities whether identified or not, and to those pupils who will be attending in the future. Our schools will seek relevant information regarding newly placed pupils to ensure as far as possible that their needs are anticipated under this Act. We will ensure that we work closely with professionals, parents and carers as appropriate to identify the challenges presented to us by new pupils under this Act.

3. Foster good relationships between different groups

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21 (5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty, applicable to Springvale School, to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relationships between pupils from different races, faith/beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds. Thurlstone Primary School should be promoting community cohesion and inclusion wherever possible to comply with and support these duties.

Two 'Specific Duties'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty

2. Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

Part Two: Aims of Thurlstone Primary School regarding Equality Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all staff at Thurlstone Primary School to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

The School Governors, along with the Senior Leadership Team, are responsible for ensuring that:

- This policy is communicated and made readily available to staff, parents and guardians
- This policy and its related procedures are implemented
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support to enable them to effectively deliver this policy and Equality Plan
- Appropriate action is taken in any case of actual or potential discrimination
- All staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and provide reasonable adjustments to staff when appointed.
- All appointment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- All staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents, please see our Anti-Bullying Policy online
- All incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, are treated with due seriousness
- The principle of equal opportunity is promoted when developing the curriculum

Teaching and support staff should:

- Enact all aspects of this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities within it
- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds
- Attend training and information sharing opportunities as necessary to use this policy with confidence, and keep up to date with current equality legislation
- Promote equal opportunities through their words and actions

Pupils according to their ability and understanding should:

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour, or any other behaviour that could cause offence to others under this policy

Parents and carers

- Parents and carers will be encouraged to participate fully in implementing the policy, particularly by reinforcing its ethos at home.

All Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors should:

- Make themselves aware of, and comply with the expectations contained within this policy
- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or language on school premises
- Bring to the attention of a member of staff any act or behaviour that concerns them with regard to this policy

Publishing the plan and links to other policies and documentation

This policy has links with the Equality and Diversity Policy, Admissions, SEN and Anti-bullying policies, as well as minutes of meetings involving the School's Governing Body, the whole staff, the Senior Leadership Team and School Council.

The Equality Act also applies to Thurlstone Primary School in its role as an employer, and there are links to our Recruitment Policies, Allegations of Abuse and Whistleblowing Policy, Health and Safety, Online-Safety and Acceptable Use policies.

Part Three: Equality Objectives

Our equality objectives, which are reviewed every three years, are based on our analysis of data and other information. They focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage.

Our current objectives are:

- To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and special educational need, disability and disadvantaged groups and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils
- To deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, that provides opportunities for all pupils to achieve the highest standard of education, using specialist programmes and dedicated resources to support pupils who need it the most. We will deliver a programme of assemblies, outside visitors, residential and educational trips to promote the ethos of equality to pupils and help pupils develop good relationships with people of different characteristics.
- To raise levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities including regular attendance to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. We will aim to raise aspirations among children and parents and raise awareness of career options for all children, challenging gender stereotypes.

Review

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Objectives have been agreed by the Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review the progress and implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Objectives at least every three years and report progress to governors.

Annex A: Definition of Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics for the school's provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age and marriage and civil partnerships are NOT protected
- characteristics for the school's provisions, but do apply to staff

Disability

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause. In relation to physical impairment:

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses) diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.

- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see definition below)
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act. Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are:

- The length the effect of the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term. 'Long term' means that an impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life, or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a disabled person.
- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.
- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day to day activities' at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glass or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

A person will be protected because of gender reassignment where they:

- Make their intention known to someone – it does not matter who this is, whether it is someone at school or at home or someone like a doctor:
- Once they have proposed to undergo gender assignment they are protected, even if they take no further steps or decide to stop later on
- They do not have to have reached an irrevocable decision that they will undergo gender reassignment, but as soon as there is a manifestation of this intention they are protected
- Start or continue to dress, behave or live (full or part time) according to the gender they identify as a person
- Undergo treatment related to gender reassignment, such as surgery or hormone therapy; or
- Have received gender recognition under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. It does not matter which of these applies to a person for them to be protected because of the characteristic of gender reassignment

This guidance uses the term 'transsexual person' to refer to someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Pregnancy & Maternity

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity means a person's:

- Colour, and/ or
- Nationality (including citizenship), and/or

- Ethnic or National Origin

And a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins. A person has the protected characteristics of ethnicity if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'. Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

Religion or Belief

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

A religion need not to be mainstream or well known to gain protection as religion. It must, though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. 'Religious belief' goes beyond beliefs and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion. A belief which is not a religious belief may be a philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.

For a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:

- It must be genuinely held
- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment.
- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society.
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Gender

A person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

- Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men)
- Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people)
- Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people)

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual.

Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestation of that sexual orientation.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

At Thurlstone Primary School, we feel that our staff's wellbeing is of vital importance. Wellbeing is an important factor in the job satisfaction and as such is a management issue. Our strategy will bring staff wellbeing to the forefront, whilst seeking to create a culture where negative wellbeing issues are identified, minimised and managed before they affect the wellbeing of staff. We have a clear aim to promote the positive health and wellbeing of our staff.

The issue of staff health and wellbeing at work is recognised as part of our broader approach to health promotion that involves us all. More information regarding staff wellbeing is available in a separate document which is available on the website.