

Hewlett-Packard Company

Marner Primary School
Equality Policy and Action Plan 2015

2015

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Contents

		Page
Section 1	Introduction	3
Section 2	Equality policy	6
Section 3	Equality policy objectives: Action Plan	17

Section 1

Introduction

It is recommended that schools develop a document that sets out how they comply with equality legislation. Although, there is no longer a legal obligation to produce a “Scheme”, schools are still required to publish information showing how they are meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty and publish their equality objectives.

The purpose of this Equality Policy and Action Plan is to:

- Support Marnier Primary School amalgamate their individual policies and schemes relating to equality into a single coherent and meaningful Equality Policy and set of objectives which can be published.

The Equality Policy is cross-referenced within the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and relevant policies and strategies.

This combined **Equality Duty** came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to **have due regard to the need to:**

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Having **due regard** means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as outlined above:

- Decision makers in schools must be aware of the duty to have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action which may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- Schools should consider equality before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep it under review on a continuing basis.
- The equality duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school’s functions, and the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind – it is not just a question of ticking boxes.

Having due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics, and

- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

2.2 Specific Duties

The Act also introduced specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their obligations under the Public sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

The Specific Duties require schools to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish equality objectives every four years (one or more as is proportionate to the organisation).

All information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public.

What information to publish or what or how many objectives to set has not been prescribed by central government, but it should be proportionate to the size of the school; the extent to which its functions affect equality; and the evidence that such objectives are needed. A starting point for this Equality Policy and Action Plan was to look at what information the school currently has available and considered whether this gives an accurate picture of progress on equality issues affecting our staff and pupils. This data was a starting point for setting specific and measurable equality objectives.

Schools had to publish their initial information and objectives by 6 April 2012. They must now update the information at least annually and publish objectives at least once every four years¹.

¹ Equality data about employees will not need to be published where a public authority has fewer than 150 employees, which means that for the great majority of schools, only pupil-related data will need to be published

Section 2

Marner Primary School Equality Policy and Action Plan 2015-16

Equality Policy

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Marner Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. We continue to have these policies, and they have informed the development of this new Equality Policy. 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, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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.

Key Achievements

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation. As of Spring 2015 our school demographic is represented by:

51.5% Girls
99.1% BME
56.2% Free School Meals
83.3% Bangladeshi

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 outcomes².

The School's Aims and Values

Our Vision

At Marner we believe in working together to enable all children to become resilient, life-long thinkers and learners in a climate of mutual respect and personal responsibility.

Our approach

Based on our overarching aims and vision 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 principles:

1. All learners are of equal value whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. We recognize, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships and actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging and want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider

² <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff and ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential
7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.
8. We value difference and diversity and appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
9. We pursue excellence in all that we do and aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community.
10. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
11. 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 vision statement about Equality

Marnar Primary 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.

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 all³. 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 SEN statement, or where the statement does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴.

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:

³ See *Appendix A* for further information about legislation

⁴ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

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

- 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.

How we developed our Policy – Participation, Involvement and Using Information

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. This has included:

- Our pupils/students

We have undertaken a workshop with the School Council to investigate what equality looks like at Marnar. The children engaged in a positive discussion about issues relating to gender. They gave us a child centred view of what should be prioritised during work on equalities at Marnar.

- Our staff

We undertook a workshop with staff members including teachers and the business support team to formulate a set of principles and objectives for the policy, and to develop an action plan.

- Our school governors

How did governors make their contribution? Can we circulate the draft version?

- Parents/carers

Planned feedback and information sharing with parents at an assembly and parent voice session.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly 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.

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. This has included participating in the Equality Framework for Schools project where the local authority has undertaken workshops with the school and audited our data and policies. As a result of this project Marner Primary School has produced this Equality Policy and Action Plan.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. 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 partners:

Joint work with Phoenix School to provide satellite provision for children within a mainstream setting.

Our well attended breakfast club runs with support from Magic Breakfast.

Shine and Poplar Harca help to fund our Saturday School provision which provides exciting curriculum opportunities every Saturday for 60 children.

The school is a member of the Poplar Partnership, which supports community cohesion and early intervention work across the community.

Marner employs a social worker for a day a week to provide support for vulnerable children and families.

Speech and language therapists from the NHS work in the school for 3 days a week to support children with language and communication difficulties.

We engage with CAMHs and COMPASS to support with mental health issues.

Marner employs a full-time parental engagement worker who runs a wide range of classes and activities to engage parents with learning.

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 made⁵ 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 and take 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.

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

⁵ 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 capability to carry out the duties.

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.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. 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 published on 27th March 2015. It will be actively promoted and disseminated.

The policy will be disseminated via the school website and a shorter version will be freely available in leaflet form.

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.

How will the annual review work – who is responsible for this?

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. See Section 3.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2015-18

Objective	Action/Milestone	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/progress:
<p>To increase pupil, staff and governors awareness of equality and human rights</p> <p>For pupils to understand they have rights, how they can exercise their rights and understand how rights link to responsibilities</p>	<p>Continue working with the 'Rights Respecting School' Programme organised by the local authority.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team and Governors</p>		
<p>To increase the participation of pupils/students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school life</p>	<p>Identify which groups are under-represented in the School Council and/or pupil voice processes within the school and encourage participation with these groups.</p> <p>Set up Early Year's school council to represent the youngest children</p>	<p>AH Pastoral Care</p>		
<p>Identification of equalities training needs for staff and governors</p>	<p>Through professional development processes with staff ensure any equality specific training is identified and provided</p>			

<p>To prevent and respond to all prejudiced based bullying and negative stereotyping</p>	<p>Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying</p> <p>Promotion of hate incident recording to students and staff</p>			
<p>To ensure gender parity in all school activities</p>	<p>Monitor attendance of girls at out-of-school hours sports clubs</p> <p>Survey girls and understand barriers to participation through School Council</p>			
<p>To improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals</p> <p>Improved attainment</p>	<p>Collate and analyse data relating to attainment by target group</p> <p>Work with Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service (SLES) to identify strategies to improve attainment of this group</p>			
<p>To promote good relations between people from different backgrounds</p> <p>Improved understanding of Tower Hamlets community and the diversity within it</p>	<p>Set up school linking with another Tower Hamlets school in a different geographical location and population make-up</p> <p>Make use of disability images pack in PSHE</p>			

Increased positive attitudes towards disabled people	Invite in representatives from disability equality groups to meet with children			
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