



POCKLINGTON CE (VC) INFANT SCHOOL

Equality Policy

Date Reviewed:	2023
Date Due for Review:	2025
Contact Officer:	SENDCO
Approved By:	Governors

Core Purpose

To help children to do today what they will be able to do independently tomorrow by becoming confident, successful life-long learners and responsible citizens.

Our School Aims

At Pocklington CE (VC) Infants, we recognise that starting school is an important step in your child's life. Your child will be taking their first steps into the world of education and first impressions count. Working closely with our parents, we want to ensure that children have the very best start to help them be happy children loving learning.

1. Environment

- To create engaging learning spaces
- The environment will engage and inspire children by reflecting their interests and learning styles.

2. High expectations

- We will scaffold pupils learning with an appropriate amount of challenge, so that they learn perseverance, and resilience enabling them to develop to their full potential
- Learning will be challenging and children will be able to take risks without fear of failure and see their mistakes as a vital form of learning.

3. Behaviour & attitude

- To provide a familiar, consistent environment that is compassionate and respectful where children feel safe and secure.

- Children will feel physically and emotionally safe through the relationships they develop with staff and with one another so that they are engaged and possess the motivation to learn.
- Success is celebrated.

4. Speech & Language

- To develop a language rich environment
- Children will use language to develop relationships, understand, express and manage feelings, to think and learn, and to be creative.

5. Active learning

- To offer active, independent learning experiences
- Learning experiences will be play-based or active, enabling children time to practice, explore, observe, investigate, repeat, copy, problem solve and represent.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation and consolidated many acts such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. It legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society and sets out the nine characteristics which are protected:

Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

It is therefore, unlawful for our school to discriminate against a person, pupil, parent (this includes adoptive, step, foster or anyone who has parental responsibility) or, staff member (teaching and non-teaching) because they have one or more of the characteristics mentioned above. This includes discriminating against pupils in relation to admissions, the way education is provided to pupils, the way pupils are able to access benefit, facility or service, excluding a pupil, or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment and the provision of goods and services, however, this does not apply to pupils. We are able to admit and organise children in age groups and treat pupils in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Definitions

Pocklington CE Infant School recognises the different types of discrimination, harassment and victimisation as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and are therefore responsible for eliminating the following:

- Direct discrimination - Treating someone less favourably because they have a protected characteristic
- Discrimination by perception - Treating someone less favourably because it is believed that they have a protected characteristic, when in fact, they do not
- Discrimination by association - Treating someone less favourably because they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination - When a practice, policy or rule, which is applied to everyone in the same way, has a worse effect on some people than others i.e. it puts particular people at a disadvantage
- Harassment - Unwanted behaviour which a person finds offensive, or which makes them feel intimidated or humiliated is unlawful under the Act if it is connected to any of the protected characteristics

Reasonable Adjustments

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Pocklington Infant School is aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments in order to remove barriers faced by people with disabilities. This may involve treating disabled pupils or staff more favourably and taking steps to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a

disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of the school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service.

In the Equality Act 2010, there are three elements to the reasonable adjustments duty that relate to: Provisions, Criteria and Practices, Auxiliary Aids and Services, and also, Physical Features. The physical features element does not apply to schools in relation to disabled pupils; instead we have a duty to plan better access for disabled pupils generally in relation to the physical environment of the school.

Pocklington Infant School will take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

There are various factors to be taken into account when considering reasonable adjustments and these include such things as the resources of the school, the financial cost of making the adjustment, assessing the extent to which the adjustment would be effective in overcoming the disadvantage, the practicability of the adjustment, health and safety requirements, the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards, the effect of the disability on the individual and, the extent to which special educational provision will be provided to the disabled pupil under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

There is a significant overlap between those pupils who are disabled and those who have Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). Many disabled pupils may receive support in school through the SEND framework and in some cases, the substantial disadvantage that they experience may be overcome by support received under the SEND framework and therefore, there will be no obligation for the school or local authority to make reasonable adjustments. However, in other cases, a disabled pupil may need reasonable adjustments to be made in addition to the special educational provision that they are receiving.

Accessibility Plan

Our school aims to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school and therefore, an Accessibility Plan has been developed to ensure that:

- The extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum is increased
- The physical environment of the school is improved to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and the services provided
- The availability of accessible information to disabled pupils is improved.

The plan is also structured to support the school's Equality Objectives. An accessibility Audit was undertaken in 2022 and the findings will be integrated into the accessibility plan. This Accessibility Audit will be undertaken bi-annual basis and the Accessibility Plan will be reviewed at least every three years. OFSTED inspections may look at the Accessibility Plan and its implementation as part of their review.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Following the introduction of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), came into force in April 2011. The PSED sets out the requirements for all public bodies when carrying out their day to day work and has two main parts:

The 'general' equality duty

The general duty requires Pocklington Infant School to have 'due regard', or think about the need to:

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

All staff are responsible for having due regard for the three general equality aims.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The 'specific duties'

The 'specific duties' require Pocklington Infants to do the following:

- Publish information annually to show compliance with the general equality duty.
- Prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least once every four years and publish an update on progress towards these objectives annually.

Equality Objectives 2022-26

As stated above, Pocklington Infant School is required to set specific and measurable equality objectives. The development of these objectives has taken into account pupil data, attainment levels, evidence of any equality issues across all of our functions, issues that may be affecting people with protected characteristics and also acknowledged the three aims of the 'general' equality duty. These objectives have been agreed with the Governing Body. Our objectives are set out below. Progress against these objectives will be reported on annually.

Publishing Equality Information

The specific duties aim to promote transparency in schools and to increase accountability to parents, carers and regulators. The publication of non-confidential equality-related data and information about Pocklington Infant School and its pupils will help parents to understand what we are doing to eliminate any potential discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Published information will also be a resource for decision-makers within the school. Details of equality related information that we have published and the location of this data is outlined in the table below:

Document/Data	Published or N/A	Where is it published?
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Equality Objectives	Published	Equality Policy
Annual update towards the equality duty and equality objectives	Published	Equality Policy - Appendix 2
Accessibility Plan (including annual progress update)	Published	Equality Policy - Appendix 1
Non-confidential equality data regarding pupil population at the school (gender, race, disabilities, Free School Meals, Children Looked After, language, SEN)	Published	School website
School performance data e.g. attainment, absence/attendance	Published	School website links to Department of Education Performance Tables
Governing body minutes		Able to view in school office / County Hall
Anti-bullying policy	Published	School website
School strategic vision	Published	School website
Parent and pupil survey results	Published	School website
Non-confidential equality data regarding staff (if employ more than 150 people)	N/A	N/A

School Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Providing accurate and appropriate information to the Governing Body to enable them to publish and demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Making sure that steps are taken to address the school's stated Equality Objectives
- Ensuring that equality and accessibility plans are readily available and that the Governors, staff, pupils, parents and guardians know about them
- Providing regular information for staff and Governors about progress against the stated Equality Objectives and accessibility plan
- Making sure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and receive training and support to carry these out
- Ensuring that all policies and strategies when being developed, implemented and reviewed do not create inequality and have a positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist
- Taking appropriate action in cases of discrimination, harassment and victimisation

All staff are responsible for promoting equality in the workplace, adhering to the regulations of the Equality Act 2010 and following the School Equality Policy.

References

Department of Education, Equality Act 2010, Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities, September 2012

Equality & Human Rights Commission, Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England, 2014

Equality & Human Rights Commission, Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils Guidance for Schools in England, 2015

GEO, Equality Act 2010: Specific Duties to Support the Equality Duty. What do I need to know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations, 2011, p6