



Opportunity with Dignity

Breakspeare School

Equality Policy

Governors' SIG Committee

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Content

- 1: Vision and Values
- 2: School Context
- 3: Legal Background
- 4: Roles and Responsibilities and Published Information
- 5: Engagement – Participation and Involvement
- 6: Using information, Equality Impact Assessment, data...
- 7: Our School's Equality Priorities
- 8: Setting Equality Objectives Action Plan

1. Vision and Values

Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

Breakspeare is a school for pupils aged 3-19 who have severe learning difficulties and may have other barriers to learning.

Our whole purpose and focus is to make life better for the young people with disabilities that attend this school. We know from experience that if we give our pupils opportunities they rise to the occasion and often surprise all who know them. Therefore, our mission is to provide pupils with as many opportunities as possible in order to meet the schools aims of finding out what our pupils can achieve, and to offer pupils the chance to have dignity in their lives. Hence our mission statement:

OPPORTUNITY WITH DIGNITY

In order to achieve the above, the following is a list of school aims that are directly related to establishing equality both in the pupils understanding of others and their treatment by society.

- to empower pupils to become their own advocates and to involve and promote this skill in parents;
- to equip pupils with the skills to maintain good quality and sustainable relationships.
- to make pupils informed about their rights and responsibilities so that they can become good citizens;
- to help pupils maintain the high quality of life after leaving which they have enjoyed while at school;
- to empower pupils to make informed decisions;
- to enable pupils to be as independent as possible;
- to educate pupils to know how to find and use leisure facilities;
- to educate pupils to know how to keep themselves healthy and safe;
- to promote the social inclusion of our pupils.
- to be a centre of excellence in the education of pupils with severe learning difficulties;
- to challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes about our pupils' disabilities;
- to promote equality of opportunity in the wider community;
- to establish partnerships with the wider community.

Breakspeare School is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010) as detailed below. We are committed to providing an inclusive establishment for all members of its community.

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined further in the Equality Act 2010 as having due regard to the need to:

1. Remove or minimise disadvantages
2. Take steps to meet different needs
3. Encourage participation when it is disproportionately low

2. School Context

The characteristics of our school

Characteristic	Total	Breakdown (number and %)
Number of pupils	69	23 girls and 33% Female 46 boys and 67% Male
Number of staff	68	94% Female 6% Male
Number of governors	10	80% Female 20% Male
Religious character		Not specific
Attainment on entry		Very low compared to national norms
Mobility of school population		2011-2012 20%
Pupils eligible for FME	13	20%
Deprivation factor		According to Raise online 40 th percentile
Disabled staff	1	
Disabled pupils (SEN/LDD)	100%	with statements
Disabled pupils (no SEN)	0	
BME pupils	15%	
BME staff		
Pupils who speak English as an additional language		
Average attendance rate	92%	Non attendance frequently due to medical causes.
Significant partnerships, extended provision, etc.		PCT, Connexions, Social services, SAPG,
Awards, accreditations, specialist status		Healthy Schools, CPD, International School, Volunteer award, EYFS, Work Experience

3. Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

General Duty under the Equality Act 2010:

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

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- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties require schools to:

- Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- To set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:

- age (for staff only)
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender (sex)
- gender identity and reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation

Disability

At Breakspeare we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils and their families.

Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

Community Cohesion

Community Cohesion supports good practice in educating pupils/students about equality and diversity. It contributes to the school's efforts to provide a broad, balanced curriculum.

We also feel that we need to educate the public about our pupils so they can always be included.

One of our school aims is for us to be agents of social change, being advocates for our pupils when they become adults so that they can lead fulfilling lives.

4. Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

Chain of accountability

The Board of Governors, supported by the Headteacher and staff, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme.

Commitment to implementation

The Head Teacher retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the action plan is delivered effectively.

Every 12 months, managers and key staff will report to the Headteacher on actions and progress. Every 12 months there will be a report on equality and diversity to the Governors meeting.

All staff are responsible for delivering the scheme both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

Responsibility for	Key person
Single equality scheme	Head teacher
Disability equality (including bullying incidents)	Head teacher
SEN/LDD (including bullying incidents)	Head teacher
Accessibility	Head teacher
Gender equality (including bullying incidents)	Head teacher
Race equality (including racist incidents)	Head teacher
Equality and diversity in curriculum content	Heads of Department
Equality and diversity in pupil achievement	Head teacher
Equality and diversity – behaviour and exclusions	Head teacher
Participation in all aspects of school life	Head teacher
Impact assessment	Head teacher
Engagement /Stakeholder consultation	Head teacher
Policy review	Governing Body
Communication and publishing	Head teacher

Commitment to review

The School Equality Scheme will be aligned with the School Development Plan. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes

The basic principle underlying the new specific duties is that of 'transparency' which ensures that we fulfil the aims of the Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. Transparency means being open about the information on which we base our decisions, on what to publish and how.

To fulfil the specific duty to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty we will publish information annually. Equality information will be available on the school website.

Commitment to action

Governors will:

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils
- Congratulate examples of good practice from the school and among individual managers, staff and pupils
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties (and ensuring the provision of 'returns' to the local authority)

Headteachers and senior staff will:

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures
- Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders
- Ensure that managers and staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
- Hold line managers accountable for effective policy implementation
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and pupils
- Highlight good practice from departments, individual managers, staff and pupils
- Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

Line managers will:

- Respond to consultation requests by creating opportunities for pupils and staff to share their comments, suggestions and feedback, ensuring that all voices are heard
- Implement the school's equality scheme, holding staff accountable for their behaviour and providing support and guidance as necessary
- Be accountable for the behaviour of the staff team, individual members of staff and pupils
- Use informal and formal procedures as necessary to deal with 'difficult' situations
- Behave in accordance with the school's policies, leading by example
- Respond appropriately to the behaviour of pupils and staff, as a whole, and individuals (praising/challenging as necessary)

- Contribute to managing the implementation of the school's equality scheme

All staff, teaching and non-teaching will:

- Contribute to consultations and reviews
- Raise issues with line managers which could contribute to policy review and development
- Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures
- Implement the policy as it applies to staff and pupils
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and pupils, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme
- Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme

All pupils/students will:

- Follow the school rules
- Treat each other and the staff who work with them with respect

All parents/carers will:

- Follow the home-school contract for behaviour.
- Provide all pupils with a good role model of behaviour when on the school premises.

5. Engagement

Involving our learners, parents/carers and others

Engagement – Participation and Involvement

In developing this policy we have welcomed the participation and involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities.

- School council
- Parent
- NAS
- volunteers

When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions - parents, pupils, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations.

Evidence of this engagement will be included in the published material showing how the duty has been addressed.

6. Using information – Equality Impact Assessment, data and other information

Evaluating the impact in terms of the outcomes

Equality Impact Assessment

EQIAs help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. It is a way to ensure we meet diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

7: Our School's Equality Objectives

Key priorities for action

Achievements to date:

- Work with the British Council
- International school status
- Comenius project funding to link with global communities

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence from:

- Our school priorities from the development plan, these are pupil based, in line with the school aims and identify specific groups of pupils.
- Our school's equality provision audit which demonstrates how CPD provision can be targeted to meet the needs of different groups
- Comenius project objectives which are about breaking down cultural barriers and social inclusion barriers and the barriers of disabled access. The project has been running for two years and we have been able to further support the objectives by hosting a Comenius assistant.

Equality Objectives are an integral part of the School Improvement Planning (SIP)

Equality Objectives	Protected Characteristic
1.To ensure communication to parents and carers demonstrates understanding and meets the needs of specific learners. (SIP Priority 1: Achievements of students)	Disability, Medical needs, Ethnicity, Race, Religion and belief, Sexual orientation, Gender, Gender identity
2. To ensure the teaching meets the needs of specific learning needs and overcomes barriers for learning. (SIP Priority 2: Quality of teaching)	Disability, Medical needs, Ethnicity, Race, Religion and belief, Sexual orientation, Gender, Gender identity
3. To develop programmes of activities both within the school and beyond to promote a holistic approach to the health and well-being for all members of the school community. (SIP priority 3: Behaviour and Safety)	Disability, Medical needs, Ethnicity, Race, Religion and belief, Sexual orientation, Gender, Gender identity
4. To address equality issues through the provision of CPD for all staff and volunteers. (SIP Priority 4: Quality of leadership and management)	Age, Disability, Pregnancy, Maternity
5.To develop staff and pupils' cultural awareness and expression through experiencing their own culture in comparison to other cultures. (SIP Priority 5: SMSC enhancement)	Disability, Ethnicity, Race, Religion and belief ,Gender, Gender identity

8: Setting Equality Objectives Action Plan

Making progress on equality issues

At Breakspeare School Equality Objectives' Action Plan is an integral part of School Improvement Planning and its reviews.