

The Pochin School Equality Plan – September 2014

Introduction

This policy was written in the Summer Term 2014 through a process of consultation with the teaching staff and approved by the Governing Body on 16 September 2014. It will be reviewed in three years.

Overview

At The Pochin School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion. We aim to create and maintain a culture in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully as possible in all aspects school life.

We will:

- monitor the achievement of pupils by ethnicity, gender and disability
- use this data when necessary to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching
- actively promote the equality of all pupils, staff and parents
- seek to prevent and if necessary confront all harassment and bullying, whatever its motivation
- strive actively to create and maintain an environment which champions respect for everyone connected with the school.

At The Pochin School we believe that diversity is strength to be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. We will be active in broadening the horizons of our pupils through curriculum and extracurricular experiences, the better that they recognise, appreciate and respect the wider world beyond our school and their own culture.

Equality in Policy and Practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with opportunities to succeed and to fulfil their potential. To do this, we will:

- use pupil achievement data to monitor and if necessary, provide personalised support to individuals and groups of pupils
- be mindful of the needs and potential of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- ensure reasonable equality of access to the wider curriculum for all pupils
- in our resources, teaching materials and curriculum content, reflect the diversity of the school population and local community in terms of ethnicity, gender, faith and disability
- promote actively attitudes, values and behaviours to challenge prejudice and discrimination any kind
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultures and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.

Admissions and Exclusions

The School has adopted its entirety the Local Authority School Admissions Policy. Admissions arrangements cannot by law discriminate on ethnicity, gender, or disability grounds. Exclusions are very rare at The Pochin School and are managed strictly in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy and the current statutory procedures. The School Governors are informed of pupil exclusions within the statutory deadlines. Governors also monitor exclusion data termly to ensure compliance with all statutory obligations in this area.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to all staff at The Pochin School. We implement all of the statutory responsibilities around equal opportunities principles and legislation. The Governors monitor closely all aspects of staffing and employment and especially as these relate to equality

and fairness. All staff appointments and promotions are made and in compliance with the law and on the basis of individual merit and the ability to be effective in the advertised role.

Employer Duties

As an employer we have an obligation to address any discrimination in the workplace and to be scrupulous in promoting equality of opportunity for all groups in our workforce.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- in our recruitment activities, complying with all Equal Opportunities legislation
- access to promoted posts and provision of further professional training on the basis of objective criteria relating to school need and individual aptitude
- Governors will monitor all aspects of recruitment and professional advancement
- Governors will apply all statutory and school grievance protocols and procedures in a fair, timely and transparent manner.

Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

The Action Plan at the end of this Equality Plan outlines the actions The Pochin School will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate racial discrimination
 - promote equality of opportunity
 - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
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- Under our specific duty we will:
 - prepare an Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality
 - assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils
 - monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has, "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

Legal Duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability

- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- Taking all reasonable steps to meet disabled people's needs as these relate to participation in the education provided by the school and/or in the wider life of the school.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- feedback from parental consultation
- input from through staff meetings
- pupil feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons and other curriculum activities
- issues raised in SEN Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support
- feedback at Governors' meetings.

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of governors

- the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- the governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- the governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- the governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- the governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The role of the Head Teacher

- it is the Head Teacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- it is the Head Teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- the Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- the Head Teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- the Head Teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness and acts on these in a timely manner.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- all staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- all staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- all staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head Teacher.
- teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school or in activities or contexts connected with the school.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

All discriminatory incidents or incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present and/or the Headteacher as appropriate.

All incidents are reported to the Head Teacher in a timely manner and are in turn reported appropriately to the governing body and Local Authority annually.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation (or other factors such as socio-economic status) can take many forms, including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

There are occasions where pupils unknowingly stray into behaviours that may be perceived as discriminatory (e.g. young children using words or actions the meaning of which is not known or clear to them). Such situations need to be dealt with reasonably and sensitively. The decision on whether to address such events as actually discriminatory is for the Head Teacher who is accountable in this to the Governors. Incidents such as these that are judged not to be discriminatory nevertheless need to be recorded but need not be formally reported.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

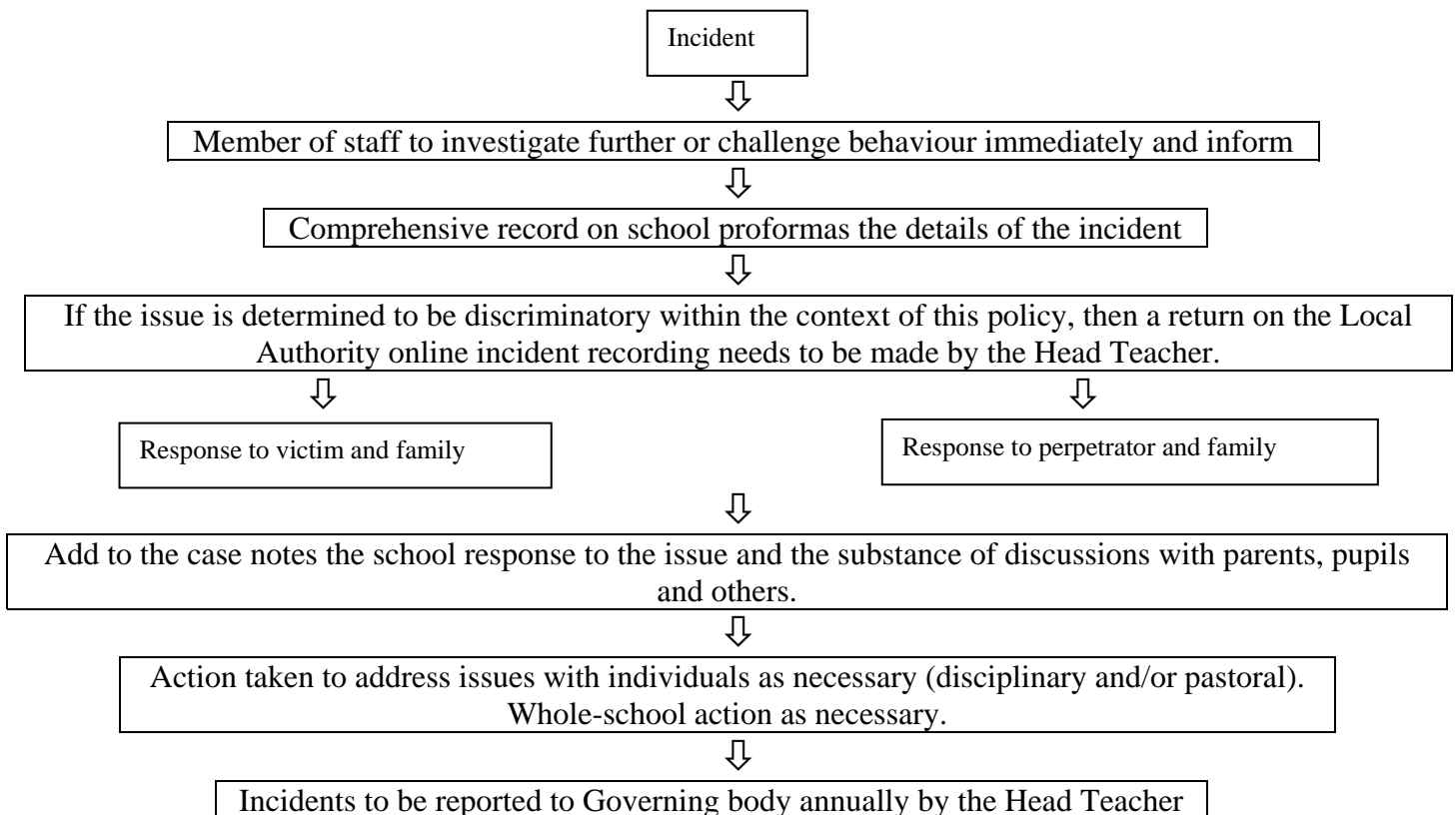
- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia
- bringing discriminatory material into school
- verbal abuse and threats

- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

Pupils and staff are clear about how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

The procedure for dealing with incidents is outlined below.



Review of Progress and Impact

The Equality Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle. We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

Publishing the Plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- publish our plan on the school website.
- raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- ensure hard copies are available from the school Office.

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who?	When?	We will see...
All	Statutory Publish and promote the Equality Plan through the school website and staff meetings.	Question about parent awareness of Equality Scheme in annual survey?	Head teacher	Place on school website 16/09/2014. Discuss at staff meeting on 17/09/14	Staff are familiar with the principles of the Equality Plan and use them when planning lessons, creating class room displays. Parents are aware of the Equality Plan.
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender, SEN and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.	Achievement data analysed by race, gender, SEN and disability	Head teacher / Governing body	Annually in Nov on receipt Raiseonline	Analysis of teacher assessments / annual data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups
All	Ensure that the curriculum promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, reflecting the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability.	Teachers monitor Long-term/Medium Term planning	Teachers via Cross-curricular themes	September 2014 – September 2017	Lesson Planning reflecting this aim. Lesson Observations and pupil work ditto
All	Recognise and represent the talents of disabled pupils in Gifted and Talented programmes where appropriate, and ensure representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race, disability, SEN and gender.	Gifted and Talented register monitored by race, gender and disability	G+T coordinator	From September 2014	Analysis of the Gifted and Talented register appropriately reflects the school's diversity

All	Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors recognise diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity. Ensure school Assemblies address equality themes in a structured and comprehensive way	Curriculum planning and observed lessons reflect equality issues. Assembly sequences and content similarly	Head teacher/ Class teachers	Ongoing	Appropriate diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups Assemblies similarly
All	Ensure all pupils are given the appropriate opportunities to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option), class assemblies, fund raising etc.	School council representation monitored by race, gender, disability	Member of staff leading on school council	From September 2014	Appropriate diversity in school council membership