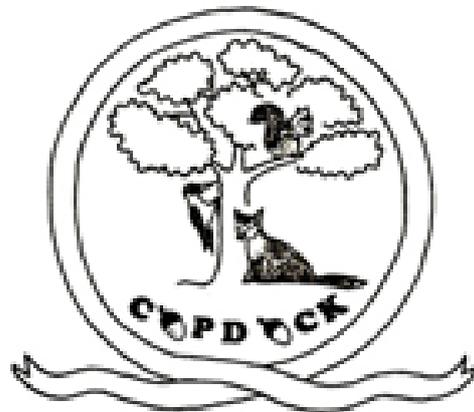
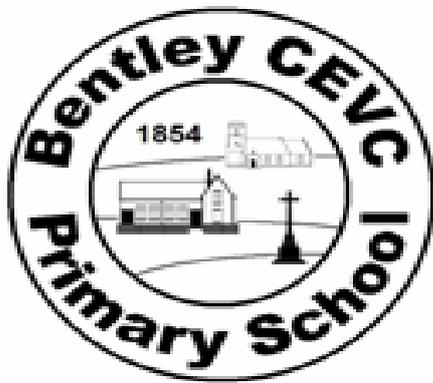


# Bentley CEVC Primary School & Copdock Primary School

## Equalities Policy



Date approved by Governors	Spring 2012
Date for review	Spring 2015
Author	Suffolk Local Authority
Staff Lead	Joanne Austin.
Responsible Governor	Louise Amphlett Lewis

## **Introduction**

*This policy is an attempt to amalgamate all the equalities legislation into one single equality policy and follows guidance from Suffolk County Council. It is accompanied by an equalities action plan which has identified priorities following self evaluation.*

## **Statement/Principles**

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for identified groups of pupils in school, ensuring there is equality of access and celebrating and valuing the heritage and strengths within the school community.

We believe that equality within our schools should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. Equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

This policy has been drawn up as a result of discussion with representatives of teaching and support staff, pupils, parents, and governors.

## **Protected Characteristics**

These characteristics are protected by law in 2010 Equality Act. It is unlawful for any school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity

## **Monitoring and Review**

The person on the staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation is Joanne Austin. She will be responsible for:

- Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities in this regard.
- Working closely with the governor responsible for this area who is Louise Amphlett-Lewis.

- Supporting positively the evaluation activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on pupils from different groups, e.g SEN, Children in Care, Minority Ethnic including Traveller and EAL pupils and Free School Meals, in the following recommended areas:
  - Pupils' progress and attainment
  - Learning and teaching
  - Behaviour discipline and exclusions
  - Attendance
  - Admissions
  - Incidents of prejudice related bullying and all forms of bullying
  - Parental involvement
  - Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities
  - Staff recruitment and retention
  - Visits and visitors

## **Policy Commitments**

### **Positive Action**

New Positive Action provisions in the 2010 Equality Act, allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.

### **Promoting Equality: Curriculum**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality.
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school.
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality; regular assemblies highlight festivals from different cultures and traditions. Other assembly themes offer insights into the lives of migrant workers and asylum seekers, for example.
- The promotion of attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour and language.
- The use of non-stereotyped materials which reflect accurately a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

### **Promoting Equality: Achievement**

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement.
- It is important to place a high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability.
- A range of teaching methods need to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils. To promote pupil engagement pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

### **Promoting Equality: Ethos and Atmosphere**

- At Bentley and Copdock Schools, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There should be a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school.
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality and are frequently monitored;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils and visitors (including parents) with disabilities.
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through planning of both assemblies, classroom based and off site activities.
- Pupils are given an effective voice, for example through the School Council and through pupil perception surveys which regularly seek their views.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community.

### **Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development**

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good equality practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions.

- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of equalities policy and practice.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

### **Enquiries about health and disability**

A new provision introduced by the Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for schools as employers to enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. The school has reviewed its existing practices to ensure we complying with both the Health Standards Regulations and the Equality Act.

The school does not require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. Instead the school should ask any health questions which are necessary to ensure that the applicant can carry out an intrinsic function of the work for the post they have applied for. The school may decide to ask necessary health questions after a job offer. In either case, the school should ensure that any health-related questions are targeted, necessary and relevant to the job applied for.

These provisions will also affect recruitment practices under the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance, section 4.34 of which advises schools to seek out past sickness records of candidates before interview. This guidance is also under consideration and in the meantime, in order to ensure compliance with these new provisions, the school does not seek out past sickness records until it has made a conditional job offer.

### **Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying**

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents.
- The school reports to Governors, parents and LA on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

### **Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

Our schools aim to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure parents/carers from all backgrounds are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Ensure that there are good channels of communication, e.g. parent newsletter and VLE, questionnaires, to ensure parents views are captured and acted upon.

- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations.
- Ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. EAL, Traveller or pupils with disabilities are made to feel welcome.

### **Responsibility for the Policy**

In our schools, all members of the school community have a responsibility for the promotion of equalities.

**The Governing Body** has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community.
- The school's equality policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality schemes are easily identifiable (these may be included within the School Improvement Plan, the school's access plan or may be stand alone documents).
- The discussions, actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are duly recorded at meetings and implemented.
- The named Equalities Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to these incidents.

**The Headteacher and Senior Leadership**, in partnership with the Governing body, have responsibility for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and schemes.
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact.
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the equalities policy.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support.
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

**All school staff** have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the school equalities policy and schemes;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other equality issues;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

### **Measuring the Impact of the Policy**

The equalities policy and all other relevant policies will be evaluated and monitored for their equality impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. As part of the action plan a timeline will be published to enable impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time. The main findings from equality impact assessments will be published for the school community.

## Appendix

Sample questions used to evaluate stakeholder opinion.

- Do you feel that male and female pupils have equal access to sport?
- Do you feel that male and female pupils have equal opportunities to participate in school life?
- Do you feel that the staffing body is representative of the school population and the community it serves?
- Are there enough opportunities for Mums and Dads to get involved in their child's education? What would make it better?
- Do you feel that the school is challenging gender stereotypes e.g. in the curriculum, with career advice, and in school life in general?

## Check list for school staff and governors

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- Is information collected on gender with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is pupil achievement monitored by gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- Are pupils of both sexes encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- Are pupils of both sexes given the same opportunities to participate in physical activity, both in and outside of school hours?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Are stereotypes in terms of gender actively challenged in both the class-room environment and in the playground?
- Are pupils encouraged to consider career paths/occupations that are traditionally gender stereotyped?
- Is the school environment as accessible and welcoming as possible to visitors of both sexes e.g. accessible to pushchairs? Are open evenings and other events which parents or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Are parents of both sexes encouraged to participate in their child's education e.g. attending parents' evening, taking up parent/ family learning courses, and assemblies?
  - Are governing bodies representative of the pupils, staff and local community that they serve?

### Employer duties-

As an employer you will need to ensure that you eliminate discrimination and harassment in your employment practice and actively promote gender equality within your workforce

- Are gender aspects considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination?
- Is bullying and harassment of staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?