



ABBEY WOOD NURSERY SCHOOL PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITIES DUTY

Equalities Statement:

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our centre.

We recognise that equality will only be achieved across the whole school community through working together – our learners, staff, governors and parents in particular.

Throughout this Scheme, 'parents' can be taken to mean mothers, fathers and carers as well as any other adults responsible for caring for a child.

This Equalities Duty provides a framework for our school to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations, and to tackle prejudice, discrimination and their causes in a holistic and proactive way.

Our Equalities Duty is based on the core principles that its effectiveness will be determined by active involvement with key stakeholders, not just in developing this plan but also in its review and implementation. Pro-active leadership is also key, prioritising activities which will produce specific, tangible improved outcomes and promote the removal of attitudinal and cultural barriers.

We have incorporated our individual policy for race equality, and our disability and gender equality schemes into one overarching Single Equality Scheme to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity across the centre.

Context:

The Equality Act 2010 is a law which protects people from discrimination which brings together all of the previous legislation. The Act covers all aspects of centre life which are to do with how a centre treats its pupils and prospective pupils, and their parents and carers; how it treats its employees; and how it treats members of the local community.

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual accessing education provision. An educational setting must not discriminate against a pupil with regards to:

- Admissions
- Provision of education
- Access to any benefit, facility or service
- Exclusions

It is also unlawful for an educational setting to harass or victimise a pupil.

The public sector duty will require all schools and educational settings to show how they are meeting the aims of the Equality Act, which are to:

- Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (stop people being treated unfairly)
- Advance Equality of Opportunity (help to make society a fairer place for everyone)
- Foster Good Relations (learn about, share and celebrate other people's differences)

All schools and nurseries will be expected to show how they engage with different groups of people, in particular people from the following groups who are known in law as those with 'protected characteristics':

- Disability (A person who has a physical or mental impairment which affects their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.)
- Gender Reassignment (The process of changing from one gender to another)
- Pregnancy and maternity (Being pregnant or expecting a baby; maternity refers to the period after the birth)
- Race (a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief (Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism))
- Gender (male or female)
- Sexual Orientation (Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes)

Objectives and Commitments:

Abbey Wood Nursery School aims to treat each individual fairly as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are adult or child. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy or maternity, or political belief, has no place within the centre.

Should any person believe that this policy is not being totally complied with, it is their duty to bring the matter to the attention of Clare Barber (Headteacher) at the earliest opportunity.

In the school we aim to ensure that all children and adults are given equal chance to develop and achieve in every aspect at the highest level, to develop a positive self-image and a sense of self-esteem in a non-critical environment with the highest expectations.

We are committed to

- showing respect for the individual
- celebrating cultural differences
- celebrating difference within ourselves and supporting each other to recognise differences
- ensuring equal access to all activities for all children
- monitoring procedures and practices in order to ensure inclusion of all children, parents and carers

- showing positive images and attitudes at all times
- providing high quality learning opportunities
- using assessment procedures to monitor individual children's achievements as well as cohorts of children
- monitoring of equipment to check appropriateness especially in challenging stereotyping in terms of race and gender
- regularly reviewing childcare practice to ensure the policy is effective.

Governing Body

The governing body will be responsible for:

- Monitoring of incidents and effectiveness of interventions/actions
- Monitoring of any action plans and implementation of policy
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed
- Investigate any concerns or allegations made against the Head Teacher
- Ensuring that there is a named governor who will liaise with the Senior Leadership Team regarding the Single Equalities Policy
- Ensuring that the governing body adequately represents the local community

Headteacher - Clare barber

- As above
- Promotion of equality and amongst children, parents and staff, supporting each group to be aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Sharing the Single Equalities Policy and any action plans with staff, families and the governing body
- Staff training as appropriate
- Responding to and dealing with incidents as they arise and keeping detailed records
- Reporting back to the governing body
- Monitoring effectiveness of the provision, teaching, policy, recruitment procedures and environments in supporting and promoting equality

Staff

- Co-operate with the implementation, monitoring and improvement of this and other policies.
- Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum
- Record and report any incidents that may be discriminatory
- Challenge language, actions, behaviours, and attitudes which are oppressive or discriminatory on the grounds as specified in the beginning statement.
- Be aware of the Equality Policy and attend training where necessary.

Service Provision

- No child will be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour or creed. Wherever possible, those designated disabled or disadvantaged will be considered for a place taking into account their individual circumstances and the ability of the centre to provide the necessary standard of care.
- Abbey Wood Nursery School will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible and relevant to all groups and individuals in the community within the targeted age groups.

- We will strive to promote equal access to services and projects by taking practical steps such as ensuring access to disabled people and producing material in relevant languages and media.

Recruitment

- Abbey Wood Nursery School will strive to ensure that all vacancies will be advertised as widely as budgets allow. Every effort will be made to ensure a representative balance on the selection panel and all members of the panel will be committed to the equal opportunities practice as set out in this policy.
- Abbey Wood Nursery School aims to ensure that all individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of occupational skill requirements. In this respect, the centre will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, marital status, race, colour, religion, cultural or national origin or sexuality, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of their work or training.
- Application forms will not include questions, which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified at the beginning of this policy.
- At interview no questions will be posed which potentially discriminate against the grounds specified at the beginning of this policy.
- At interview all candidates will be asked the same questions, and members of the selection panel will not introduce nor use any personal knowledge of candidates acquired outside the selection process.
- Candidates will be given the opportunity to discuss the reasons why they were not successful.

Publishing the Policy

This policy will be freely available for families, visitors and the governing body. Copies can be requested from the School Office. It can also be translated into other languages and Braille if required. It is also available on the school website.

Context:

Abbey Wood Nursery School is an integrated nursery school with currently 136 children on roll. We currently offer 24 places for 2 year olds and 112 places for 3 and 4 year olds. Abbey Wood Nursery School is situated in the Royal Borough of Greenwich within a diverse community. Our families come from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds with the majority coming from Africa and the UK. Many of our families have English as an Additional Language.

Race Equality

Mission Statement:

Our School welcomes its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. We value the linguistic, cultural and religious diversity of the Centre and its community. Our overall aim is to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to actively promote equality of opportunity and positive race relations throughout our Centre. We also endeavour to:

- ensure that all children, parents/carers, staff, governors and visitors receive fair and equitable treatment

- support our children to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as that of others
- ensure that children become independent, high achieving learners who are competent users of English.

Commitments

We are committed to:

- actively tackling racial discrimination as well as promoting equal opportunities and positive race relations
- encouraging, supporting and helping all children and staff to reach their potential
- working with parents/carers and the wider community to tackle racial discrimination and to follow and promote positive practice
- making sure the race equality policy and its procedures are followed.

Disability Equality

Mission Statement:

At Abbey Wood Nursery School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled children, parents/carers, staff, governors and all other school users. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and participate fully in the life of our Centre. The achievement of all children will be monitored to raise standards and ensure inclusive learning and teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that our learning environment is as accessible as possible. At Abbey Wood we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, work and visit here.

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

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-time adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

Impairment

In the DDA definition:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairment
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness

The definition can include a wide range of impairments including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) etc. See attached list of disabilities.

Substantial

‘Substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’.

Long-Term

'Long-term' means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

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 effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Special Needs

Children with a disability do not have special needs if:

- They do not have any difficulty in accessing education and if they don't need any special educational provision to be made for them.

Special Educational Need

Children with a disability have special educational needs if:

- They have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them. This means anything additional to or different from what is normally available in the setting.

Discrimination

A failure to comply with two key duties may amount to unlawful discrimination. They are:

- To treat a disabled child/adult 'less favourably'
- Not to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled children and adults.

Reasonable Adjustments

This involves thinking ahead and predicting what our setting may need to do for disabled children and adults before any problems arise.

The Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on educational settings who need to have due regard for the following when carrying out their functions:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminating 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 steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and applies to all disabled children, parents/carers, staff and those using services provided by educational settings.

Additional Implications for Educational Settings

The role of the setting as a service provider

Settings have additional implications as a service provider to make their buildings accessible when they hire out rooms or parts of the building.

Contact with parents/carers

When providing newsletters and information for parents/carers settings should make this information available in an accessible format so that parents/carers who may be, for example, visually impaired can access the information. Additionally, events for parents/carers such as Open Evenings and meetings should be held in accessible parts of the building.

Hiring transport

School staff will need to be aware of Section 6 of the Act when hiring transport as it puts new duties on transport providers, including bus and coach companies and the taxi and private hire car trade. The requirement to provide accessible vehicles is extended to include these transport providers.

Election of parent governors

The election of parent governors will now be covered by the DDA 2005 and governors will need to ensure that the procedures for candidates to stand for election and for parents/carers to vote for candidates are accessible to disabled people. However, the result of the election is not covered and disabled candidates will not be able to claim that they were not elected simply because they were disabled. Once a disabled parent governor is elected, the School governing body functions are covered and the School must ensure that they can participate fully in the life of the School.

List of Disabilities

The definition of disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments including:

- Arthritis
- Contenance
- Severe asthma
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- HIV
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Hearing or visual impairments
- Mobility difficulties
- People with mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities
- Dyslexia
- Autism
- Speech and language impairments
- ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder)
- Severe disfigurements

Impairment does not of itself mean that a person is disabled. It is the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities that has to be considered. It is likely that many of the children

who have SEN and a statement or who are at EYA+ of the revised Code of Practice will count as disabled.

Gender Equality Scheme

Mission Statement:

At Abbey Wood, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for children, parents/carers, staff, governors and all those receiving services from the Centre, irrespective of gender. The achievement of all children will be monitored by gender and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive learning and teaching. We will aim to provide our children with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of gender or stereotypes. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against children and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation. At Abbey Wood, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The Gender Equality Duty (GED)

The Government has introduced the Equality Act 2006 with the purpose of ensuring that people are treated fairly and equally (i.e. are not subject to discrimination). Within this Act a Gender Equality Duty was established for the public sector. The new legal duty places a requirement on public bodies to be proactive and to promote gender equality within their service delivery and employment. It is recognised that public authorities can make an enormous contribution towards removing barriers to equal opportunities that exist in society.

The legislation outlines a General Duty and Specific Duties.

The General Duty

The General Duty requires that every public authority in carrying out its functions should:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, taking active steps to comply with both the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act.
- Take active steps to promote equality of opportunity between men and women when carrying out their functions and activities.

The Specific Duties

In addition, public bodies are required to comply with the Specific Duties which are:

- To produce and publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES) identifying Gender Equality goals and actions to meet those goals.
- To consult with employees and stakeholders in the development of the GES.
- To monitor and review progress. The scheme will need to be reviewed every three years.
- To publish an annual report on progress with the Action Plan.
- To develop and publish an equal pay policy including measures to address promotion, personal development and occupational segregation.
- To conduct and publish gender impact assessments of all their legislation and major policy developments and publish their criteria for conducting such assessments.

The Act also makes provisions on prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment and the provision of goods, services, facilities, education, use and disposal of premises and the exercise of public functions.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the GED, there is a specific duty to ensure that current and future policies and practices do not discriminate against either sex, or maintain or lead to gender inequality.

To meet the Duty it is essential that gender impact assessments are undertaken and published for all policy developments and that the criteria for conducting such assessments are published. You will need to:

- Identify the aims of the policy or practice.
- Collect evidence on the impact of policies on both sexes.
- When new policies are being developed, assess their likely consequences for both sexes.
- Alter or amend proposed policies so that they promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination.
- Resource those changes appropriately.

Monitoring

Monitoring is necessary in order to identify that no adverse impact has taken place as a result of the implementation of a policy.

To meet the Gender Equality Duty, it is essential that aspects of Centre life are monitored to identify whether there is an adverse impact on children and adults. The following should be monitored:

- Achievement of children by gender.
- Staff satisfaction levels by gender
- Distribution of staff pay scales.

Involvement and consultation

It is a requirement that children, parents/carers, staff, governors, trade unions and service users should be involved in the production of the Gender Equality Scheme.

Abbey Wood will consult with children, parents/carers, staff, trade unions and service users in the development of our Gender Equality Scheme through:

- Focus groups
- Staff meetings
- Questionnaires
- Interviews

Appendix One:

Check List for Centre Staff and Governors

- Is information collected on disability with regards to children, parents/carers and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is children's achievement monitored by disability? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- Are disabled children encouraged to participate fully in the life of the Centre? How is this shown through representation in events in the School?
- Is bullying and harassment of disabled children and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Is disability portrayed positively in the School?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Deaf Awareness Week to raise awareness of disability?
- Is the School as accessible as possible to children, parents/carers, staff and visitors?
- Is information available to children, parents/carers, staff and visitors in formats which are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

See: **Safeguarding Policy**