


# Equality Policy

Valley Primary School



## POLICY APPROVAL

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Date of Next Review:	September 2025
Signature:	 Amarjot Butcher. Chair of Local Governing Body.
Signature:	<i>S. J. Milewski.</i> Susan Milewski. Headteacher.
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**September 2024**

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## 1. Aims

Valley Primary School aims to be fully inclusive and values all children for their unique personality. Our school focuses on the well-being and progress of every child and we are committed to ensuring all members of our community are of equal worth. We are committed to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people.

## 2. Public Sector Equality Duty

Introduced in 2011, the public sector equality duty is a legal requirement for public sector organisations to have due regard to:

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

Valley Primary School is committed to advancing equality and will have due regard for these aims:

- 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.
- Promoting cultural development and understanding of equality through a rich range experiences and teaching and learning opportunities, both in and beyond the school.

## 3. Scope and Purpose

Valley Primary School is committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all pupils, parents, staff, governors, visitors and job applicants. This is reflected in the vision and values of the school.

The School aims to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.



The School does not discriminate against staff because of sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability or age (the protected characteristics).

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat pupils, parents, visitors, suppliers and former staff members.

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

Prejudice-related incidents, discrimination, bullying and harassment will be dealt with by the Resolution Policy (Staff) or Anti-Bullying Policy (Pupils).

This Policy applies to all Valley Primary School employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not employees but who work at the School (collectively referred to as “Staff” in this policy).

All staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the School’s aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Staff will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

Any questions about the content or application of this policy should be referred to the appropriate line manager in the first instance.

This policy applies to all aspects of the School’s relationship with staff and to relations between staff members at all levels. This includes:

- job advertisements;
- recruitment and selection;
- training and development;
- opportunities for promotion;
- conditions of service;
- pay and benefits;
- conduct at work;
- disciplinary and grievance procedures; and
- termination of employment.

The School will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.



#### 4. Forms of Discrimination

- Discrimination by or against a member of staff is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Such requirements will need to be objectively justified.
- Harassment and/or Victimisation related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

#### 5. Recruitment and Selection

- The School aims to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. The School ensures individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criterias are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.
- Job advertisements will avoid using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. This policy will be included on our school website and a copy will be available on request to anybody enquiring about vacancies.
- The School will take steps to ensure that its vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market. Applicants will not be asked about health or disability at application stage. Limited questions may be asked at interview stage regarding health and/or disability where necessary, for example:
  - Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);
  - Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;
  - Positive action to recruit disabled persons;
  - Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).



- Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment without first considering whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account.
- The School is required by law to ensure that all members of staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective members of staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. A list of acceptable documents is available from the HR team.
- To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in the School, the School may monitor applicants' race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be used solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Obtaining this data helps us to take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders:

The School undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully against any candidate who is required to provide criminal record information during the recruitment process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent a candidate from working with the School. Whether or not it does will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences and as noted in the safer recruitment policy.

## **6. Staff Opportunities, Training and Promotion of Equal Opportunities**

- All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within their roles and any promotion decisions will be on the basis of merit.
- The composition and movement of staff at different levels will be reviewed regularly to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation.
- Where appropriate the School will take steps to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups. All benefits and facilities will be accessible to all staff as applicable to their roles.



- As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:
  - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities)
  - Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
  - Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (including provision at after school clubs).

This is the responsibility of all staff and in fulfilling this aspect of the duty, staff will:

- Consider attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of racist bullying) and/ or any issues associated with particular protected characteristics.

## **7. Termination of Employment**

- The School will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- The School will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties applied are without discrimination, and are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

## **8. Disability Discrimination**

- If a member of staff is disabled, or becomes disabled, in the course of their employment, they are encouraged to tell us about their condition. This is to enable us to support the member of staff as much as possible.
- If a member of staff experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, they should contact their Line Manager in the first instance to discuss any reasonable adjustments to their working conditions or duties which they consider to be reasonable and necessary or which would assist in the performance of their duties. Support will also be sought from HR/Senior Leadership team where appropriate.



- With Senior Leadership Team/HR support, the Line Manager should consult with the member of staff and their medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where reasonable, practicable and proportionate in all the circumstances of the case.
- Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it would not be reasonable for the School to accommodate a particular adjustment and in such circumstances, it will ensure that it provides the member of staff with its reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they place disabled staff, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonably practicable and proportionate the School will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

#### **9. Fixed Term Employees and Agency/Temporary Workers**

- The School will monitor its use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities where applicable.

#### **10. Part-Time Workers**

- The School will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. It will also ensure that requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the Flexible Working Policy.

#### **11. Complaints of Discrimination, Victimisation, Harassment or Prejudice-Related Incidents on the Protected Characteristics**

- The School will treat seriously and will take action where appropriate concerning all complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on any of the protected characteristics made by any of its staff, students or other third parties.
- Any member of staff who considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, victimised, harassed or subjected to a prejudice-related incident within the meaning of this policy, they should discuss the matter in the first instance with their Line Manager or, if inappropriate under the circumstances of the case, with the Headteacher.





- If the incident(s) were by another member of staff or third-party (pupils, parents, suppliers, governors or visitors), the member of staff should refer to the anti-bullying and resolution policy. In most cases, it should be possible to resolve the matter informally and reach a satisfactory resolution.
- If a member of staff wishes to make a formal complaint then they should follow the guidance in the Resolution Policy.
- If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment, the School will investigate the matter fully. In the course of the investigation the employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation for their actions.
- If it is concluded that the claim is false or malicious then the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.
- If on the other hand it is concluded that the employee's action amounts to unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment they may be subject to disciplinary action under the School's disciplinary Policy and Procedure, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

## **12. Review of Policy**

- This policy is reviewed and amended every year by the Governing Board.
- Senior Leaders will update the equality information we publish annually plus this policy will be monitored to ensure consistency of application and adherence to equalities legislation. This will ensure the policy operates in accordance with duties to promote equality, to eliminate discrimination and to promote good relations between staff with protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010.