



Highfield Primary School Equalities Policy

VISION AND VALUES

Together we are nurturing the citizens of today, the leaders of tomorrow. We are doing this as educators, parents, and governors by fostering a love of learning regardless of the subject, discipline or activity. This allows each child to unlock their potential, achieve success, celebrate their talents and, ultimately, to lead successful lives and become positive role models in society.

(Headteacher Welcome)

At Highfield we believe that every child has the right to equality of outcome and to achieve their full potential. To achieve equity, we embrace the principles of fairness, social justice, inclusion, global citizenship and community cohesion.

Equity is of paramount importance in society for several compelling reasons. It represents the commitment to fairness, justice, and ensuring that every individual can thrive and reach their full potential, irrespective of their background, identity, or circumstances. Here are some key reasons why equity is vital in society:

1. **Promotes Social Justice:** Equity ensures that justice is not just a lofty ideal but a tangible reality. It aims to rectify historical and systemic injustices that have disadvantaged certain groups based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, and other factors. By addressing these injustices, society becomes more just and fairer.
2. **Enhances Economic Prosperity:** When people are treated equitably, they have better access to education, employment opportunities, and resources. This not only benefits individuals but also contributes to economic growth and stability. A more equitable society can harness the talents and potential of all its members, which can lead to increased productivity and innovation.
3. **Reduces Health Disparities:** Equity in healthcare and access to resources can significantly reduce health disparities. When everyone has equal access to healthcare services, preventive care, and a healthy environment, it leads to better overall public health outcomes and reduces the burden on the healthcare system.
4. **Strengthens Social Cohesion:** Equity fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion. When people feel that they are treated fairly and have equal opportunities, it leads to stronger social bonds and a greater sense of community. This, in turn, reduces social tensions and conflicts.
5. **Promotes Diversity and Inclusion:** Equity encourages diversity and inclusion in all aspects of society, including workplaces, educational institutions, and public spaces. A diverse



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society benefits from a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and talents, which can lead to better decision-making and problem-solving.

6. Prevents Discrimination and Bias: An equitable society actively works to eliminate discrimination and bias. This not only benefits marginalized groups but also helps educate the broader population about the harms of prejudice and stereotypes.
7. Supports Education and Equal Opportunities: Equity in education is critical for individual and societal advancement. It ensures that every child has access to quality education, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background. Equal educational opportunities empower individuals to pursue their aspirations and contribute to society.
8. Reduces Poverty and Inequality: Equity initiatives can help reduce poverty and income inequality. By addressing disparities in income, housing, and employment, society can create more equal economic opportunities.
9. Promotes Human Rights: Equity is closely aligned with human rights principles, which emphasize the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. Ensuring equity in society is a way to protect and promote human rights for all.
10. Enhances Long-Term Stability: Societies that prioritize equity are often more stable and resilient. Addressing underlying inequalities and grievances can reduce social unrest and conflicts, leading to greater peace and stability.

In conclusion, equity is not just a moral imperative; it is also essential for the overall well-being and prosperity of society. By striving for greater equity, societies can create a more just, inclusive, and harmonious environment where all individuals can lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the betterment of their communities.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Highfield Primary School is a successful, high attaining school, serving a mixed area in the north of Leeds. As of September 2023, the school has 421 children on roll. It is a thriving, growing, multicultural school, with just under half the children coming from white British backgrounds and just over half the children representing a range of minority ethnic groups, the largest group being Indian. Most of our children are fluent English speakers with just over 30% speaking English as an additional language. Of those children identifying as EAL, Telugu is the most common first language followed by Urdu and Chinese (Cantonese). There are 28 different languages spoken in our school, 17 ethnic groups and families from countries across the globe creating a rich tapestry of culture and vibrancy upon which we thrive. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and with EHC Plans is below average. Highfield prides itself on its inclusive approach and atmosphere and holds both the Stephen Lawrence Award and Inclusion Charter Mark. A distinctive feature of Highfield is its highly successful



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integration of children with visual impairment and autism. Highfield meets the core offer of the Extended School's Agenda. We have highly successful and well-regarded wrap around care, an extensive range of after school clubs and activities (Healthy Schools Advanced Award reaccredited 2023) and very active parent groups who plan an excellent range of community events across the school year.

Most children enter school with levels of attainment broadly in line with those found nationally. These children come from a wide variety of nursery and early childcare settings. Strong induction and transition links exist between these settings and the reception class staff. Highfield believes strongly in the importance of sport (Sports Mark Gold) the arts and music (Art Mark Platinum Gold Award) and offers the children a very broad, balanced and creative curriculum with many opportunities for enrichment.

AIMS

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

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

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal obligation imposed on public authorities and certain other organizations in the United Kingdom, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Its primary purpose is to promote equality and prevent discrimination in the provision of public services and the functions of public authorities. The PSED is a proactive approach to advancing equality and diversity in the public sector. An explanation of the key aspects of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) can be found in Appendix 1.

What do we mean by **Equality**?

At Highfield Primary School we understand equity to mean treating everyone fairly and with dignity and by valuing their individual characteristics such as their age, disability, gender identity, race, sex, religion, belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic circumstances or any other visible or non-visible difference. We further understand that people have different needs, situations and goals and therefore achieving equality requires the removal of discriminatory barriers that limit what people, especially children and young people can do and can be. We recognise that inequality can be experienced in a variety of ways: through outcomes; access to services; the degree of independence to make decisions affecting lives



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and inequality of treatment (including in relation to employment) through direct and indirect discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions or systems intentionally or inadvertently. Therefore, achieving equality of outcome requires the removal of discriminatory barriers, and the recognition that the allocation and distribution of resources cannot always be distributed equally if we are to live up to our commitment to everyone being able to achieve their full potential whilst at Highfield Primary School.

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which is a piece of legislation in the United Kingdom that provides legal protection against discrimination and promotes equality in various areas of life. It replaced and consolidated several previous anti-discrimination laws, making it easier to understand and enforce the rights and responsibilities related to equality and discrimination. The key aspects of the Act are outlined in Appendix 2.
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

LEGISLATION AND THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

In the context of anti-discrimination and equality laws, "protected characteristics" refer to specific personal attributes, traits, or characteristics that are safeguarded against unfair treatment or discrimination. These characteristics are identified and protected by legislation to ensure that individuals are not subjected to prejudice, bias, or discrimination based on these attributes. The nine specific protected characteristics in the United Kingdom, under the Equality Act 2010, are:

1. **Age:** This refers to a person's age, whether they are young, middle-aged, or elderly. It protects individuals from age-based discrimination, both young and old.
2. **Disability:** Disability protection covers individuals with physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
3. **Gender Reassignment:** This protects individuals who are undergoing or have undergone a process of changing their gender, whether it involves medical intervention or not.
4. **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** People who are married or in a civil partnership are protected against discrimination on this basis.
5. **Pregnancy and Maternity:** This covers women who are pregnant, have recently given birth, or are on maternity leave. It aims to prevent discrimination related to childbirth and motherhood.



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6. **Race:** Race protection includes ethnicity, nationality, or ethnic origin. It safeguards individuals from discrimination based on their racial or ethnic background.
7. **Religion or Belief:** This protects individuals from discrimination based on their religious beliefs, or the absence of religious beliefs (atheism, agnosticism), as well as philosophical beliefs.
8. **Sex:** This refers to biological sex, distinguishing between male and female. It ensures that individuals are not discriminated against based on their sex or gender.
9. **Sexual Orientation:** This protects individuals from discrimination based on their sexual orientation, whether they are heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or identify in other ways.

These protected characteristics are the foundation of anti-discrimination laws in the UK. The aim is to create a more inclusive and equitable society by preventing discrimination and promoting equal treatment and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of these characteristics. At Highfield Primary School we understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth valuing these characteristics.

The concept of protected characteristics may not be directly taught to Highfield children in the same way as it is to adults. However, the underlying principles of equality, diversity, and respect for differences are important to instil at a young age. Here's why these concepts and the understanding of protected characteristics are valuable in our primary school setting:

1. **Promotes Inclusivity:** Teaching children about protected characteristics helps create an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and respected, regardless of their differences. It encourages a sense of belonging and helps prevent bullying or exclusion based on characteristics like race, gender, or disability.
2. **Fosters Empathy:** Learning about different protected characteristics and the challenges some people may face can foster empathy and understanding among children. It helps them recognize the experiences and feelings of others, which is crucial for building positive relationships.
3. **Prevents Discrimination:** By introducing the concept of protected characteristics, educators can lay the foundation for children to understand the importance of not discriminating against others based on these characteristics. This early education can help reduce instances of prejudice and bias in the school community.
4. **Supports a Diverse Curriculum:** Teaching about different cultures, backgrounds, abilities, and identities enriches the curriculum and provides a more holistic education. It exposes children to a wider range of perspectives, histories, and experiences. At Highfield, Respect, Equality and Diversity (RED) is one of the four key drivers of the Highfield Curriculum.
5. **Prepares for a Diverse World:** In an increasingly diverse world, it's essential for children to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to interact respectfully and collaboratively with people from different backgrounds. Understanding protected characteristics contributes to this readiness.



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6. **Encourages Critical Thinking:** Discussing protected characteristics can encourage critical thinking skills as children explore questions related to fairness, equality, and justice. This can lead to thoughtful discussions and personal growth.
7. **Supports Anti-Bullying Initiatives:** Many anti-bullying programs in schools incorporate lessons about diversity, respect, and the importance of protecting individuals from discrimination. Teaching about protected characteristics aligns with these initiatives and helps create a safe school environment.
8. **Promotes Equality of Opportunity:** By raising awareness about protected characteristics, schools can work to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate in activities, receive support when needed, and achieve their academic potential.
9. **Celebrates Differences:** Rather than merely tolerating differences, discussing protected characteristics can help children appreciate and celebrate diversity. This can lead to a more positive and harmonious school community.
10. **Lays a Foundation for Lifelong Learning:** The concepts of equality, diversity, and protected characteristics are lifelong lessons. Introducing them at a young age can establish a strong foundation for continued learning and engagement with these issues as children grow.

At Highfield, the focus is on age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate ways of introducing these concepts. Our approach also recognises and respects the different values and beliefs of our community. Delivery might involve storytelling, discussions about fairness, inclusive classroom activities, and promoting positive behaviours and attitudes. By addressing these topics early on, Highfield Primary Schools can contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable society for the future.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) aims to create a more just and equitable society by ensuring that public resources and decision-making processes are used to benefit everyone, regardless of their protected characteristics. It is comprised of two main parts:

1. **General Duty:** The PSED consists of a general duty, which requires public authorities to have "due regard" to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimization based on protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). Highfield has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, Mrs R Homan and an equality link governor, Mrs F Bhula. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.
 - Advance equality of opportunity among people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:
 - Produce attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing, e.g., EAL, Disadvantaged, SEND
 - Analyse the data referenced above to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response



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- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Examples of this could include:
 - Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) which is taught school-wide, and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas.
 - Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
 - Working with our local community which includes organising school trips and activities based around the local community.

- 2. **Specific Duties:** In addition to the general duty, public authorities subject to the PSED must also comply with specific duties. These specific duties require public authorities to:
 - Publish information demonstrating their compliance with the general duty, including data on workforce diversity, equality objectives, and information about how they engage with the public regarding equality issues.
 - Set specific, measurable equality objectives at regular intervals. These objectives should address the most significant inequalities and disparities within their service provision and functions.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations outlined further on in this scheme, we at Highfield Primary School are guided by six principles.

Principle 1: A commitment to ensure all members of the school and wider community are of equal value. Examples of this include:

- **Equal Treatment:** Equality emphasizes the fair and equal treatment of all individuals, regardless of their characteristics or backgrounds. It means that everyone should have the same opportunities, rights, and access to resources.
- **Non-Discrimination:** The principle of equality rejects discrimination based on protected characteristics such as race, gender, age, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. It ensures that individuals are not disadvantaged or treated unfairly due to these characteristics.
- **Equal Access:** Equality involves providing equal access to education for all members of our school community. It aims to remove barriers that might prevent certain groups from participating fully.
- **Positive Action:** In some cases, promoting equality may involve positive action measures to address historical disadvantages or underrepresentation. These measures are designed to level the playing field and promote equal opportunities.



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Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity through our whole school ethos

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face. Respecting diversity includes:

- **Respect for Differences:** Diversity encourages respect and appreciation for the unique characteristics, backgrounds, and perspectives of individuals. We recognize that diversity enriches our society and school.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusion is a fundamental aspect of diversity, ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds are valued and included in decision-making processes and activities.
- **Celebration of Differences:** Diversity promotes the celebration of differences and the recognition that a diverse group of people can bring a wide range of talents, experiences, and ideas to our school.
- **Promotion of Equal Voice:** Diversity seeks to ensure that underrepresented or marginalized groups have an equal voice and are empowered to participate fully in society or organizations.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging throughout the whole community.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- **Unity and Integration.** Community cohesion emphasizes the importance of building a strong, integrated community where individuals from different backgrounds live, work, and interact harmoniously.
- **Shared Values.** It involves promoting shared values and a sense of belonging among community members. These values include respect, tolerance, and a commitment to work together for the common good.
- **Reducing Divisions.** Community cohesion efforts work to reduce divisions, tensions, and conflicts that may exist within a community, particularly those based on race, religion, or ethnicity.
- **Social Inclusion:** The principle of community cohesion aims to ensure that all community members, regardless of their backgrounds, have opportunities for social inclusion and participation in community life.
- **Engagement and Participation:** Encouraging community engagement and participation in decision-making processes helps strengthen bonds and build a sense of ownership and responsibility among our community members.

Principle 4: To promote equality, diversity and community cohesion through curriculum, teaching and learning.



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Promoting equality through curriculum, teaching, and learning is crucial for creating an inclusive educational environment where all students have equitable access to opportunities and resources. Here are some key strategies and principles for achieving this goal:

- **Diverse Representation:** Ensure that the curriculum includes a wide range of perspectives, cultures, and voices.
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Tailor teaching materials and methods to align with the cultural backgrounds and experiences of your students. This helps students relate to the content and feel valued.
- **Inclusive Teaching Practices:** Differentiate instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Provide additional support or challenges as needed, ensuring that each student has an opportunity to succeed.
- **Safe and Inclusive Classroom Environment:** Foster a classroom environment where all students feel safe, respected, and included. Address any instances of discrimination or bias promptly and sensitively.
- **Curriculum Review and Revision:** we review and evaluate the Highfield Curriculum to ensure it remains inclusive, up-to-date and responsive to current events and societal changes. This also includes wider opportunities for learning and personal development which are evidenced through the 'Wider Curriculum' tracking grid.
- **Achievement and Progress:** we have high expectations of everyone involved with the school, monitor, evaluate and review outcomes for different learner groups and provide appropriate support and intervention to ensure that all students reach their full potential.

Principle 5: To Tackle Discrimination and Harassment

Tackling discrimination and harassment in schools is essential for creating a nurturing, inclusive, and respectful educational environment. It has far-reaching positive effects on students' well-being, academic success, and their ability to engage constructively in a diverse and interconnected world. It is not only a moral obligation but also a fundamental aspect of providing a high-quality education for all. We identify and remove all practices and customs which are discriminatory and record, report and challenge all incidents of prejudiced-based bullying and harassment. The importance of tackling discrimination and harassment is outlined in Appendix 3.

Principle 6: Professional Development

Professional development that emphasizes equality and diversity can lead to a more inclusive, innovative, and equitable workplace. It helps employees better understand and appreciate differences, reduces biases, and fosters an environment where all individuals can thrive and contribute to the organization's success. We ensure that all staff are empowered to challenge discriminatory behaviour and promote equality, diversity and community cohesion through their teaching and relationships with students and that governors understand their statutory duties.



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These principles that cover equality, diversity, and community cohesion collectively contribute to creating a more inclusive, fair, and unified society. They recognize the importance of respecting and valuing differences while working together to address inequalities and build strong, cohesive communities that benefit everyone.

ACHIEVING OUR PRINCIPLES

Principles in themselves are not enough. This is how we seek to achieve them:

Principle 1: A commitment to ensure all members of the school and wider community are of equal value.

- Mrs R Homan, the Curriculum Lead, Respect, Equality and Diversity Lead and member of the Senior Leadership Team, leads our commitment to equality.
- Respect, Equality and Diversity is one of the four key drivers of the Highfield Curriculum. It is therefore threaded through our teaching and learning.
- The School Council are actively lead on increasing participation and inclusion in school events and giving all children a voice.
- We will report to parents and carers at least termly on progress in terms of equality and diversity, and provide opportunities for them to contribute to and be consulted on this aspect of our work, where appropriate. This includes the Headteacher's newsletters and the children's newspaper 'The Highfielder'.
- We will publish details of our equalities work, including our "equality objectives", on a dedicated page on our school website (in line with the Equality Act 2010 Specific Duty), providing a rationale for why we have selected each objective and what actions we have identified to achieve it.
- We will continue to involve the whole community in our celebration of respect, equality and diversity through our RED Award work. This will include our annual RED celebration day and other initiatives.
- We will continue to develop our engagement with the local community through the Family of Schools, Red Kite Alliance, services such as the Moor Allerton Library, action groups such as the Alwoodley Climate Action Group and charities.
- We will continue to develop outreach opportunities for members of our community. This includes signposting to services and providing guidance for families.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity through our whole school ethos

- Our behaviour policy is centred upon our behaviour motto: Ready. Respectful. Safe. How we show respect for one another and promote positive relationships is modelled and taught explicitly through our PSED and PSHE curriculums in addition to whole school assemblies led by the Headteacher.
- 54 articles make up the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These are displayed in every classroom and referred to by the class teacher.



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- Our RED Award work and commitment to it will be celebrated and shared through our school newsletters, website and open events.
- We raise awareness of and celebrate difference through our marketing and also school wide initiatives, for example Neurodiversity Week and Black History Month.
- We promote pupil voice by making pupil feedback a key part of staff performance management, work scrutiny and teaching and learning development on the School Improvement Plan.
- We ensure that all children are included.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging throughout the whole community.

- We view the family-community-school relationship as a partnership of equals. All members are valued and partnerships are built on trust, shared values and the common goal of building a more positive society together.
- We lead by example, modelling positive attitudes and behaviours. This includes demonstrating respect, kindness and inclusivity in our actions.
- We promote open and honest communication among all members of the school community. 'Book Looks', 'Watch Us Learn', 'Stay and Play' and parental workshops help foster this relationship with our community and ensure that students, parents, and staff feel heard and valued.
- Our Governing Body work to ensure they are representative of the community we serve and thereby represent it. They also have strategic oversight of the Equalities Policy and play an active role in our Respect, Equality and Diversity agenda.
- We develop peer support programmes throughout school and across age groups to support each other in both academic and social activities. Examples include our buddies system, peer mediators and reading buddies.
- We Integrate cultural and diversity education into the curriculum. This includes celebrating cultural events and holidays to foster understanding and appreciation of different backgrounds.
- We promote empathy, conflict resolution and empowerment by threading Respect, Equality and Diversity through our curriculum. We also promote these values through leadership roles and responsibilities.

Principle 4: To promote equality, diversity and community cohesion through curriculum, teaching and learning.

- The 'Respect, Equality and Diversity Through the Highfield Curriculum' document is a map of how RED is threaded through the whole curriculum and underpins our teaching and learning. This is continually reviewed to ensure that we exploit any opportunities to improve our offer. RED is also one of our four key drivers to maintain its profile as an essential element of the Highfield Curriculum.
- Our termly audit of our curriculum by subject leaders includes a focus on the range of perspectives, cultures, and voices within it to ensure every member of our community feels represented and celebrated.



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- We will monitor data on progress and attendance by different learner groups in line with our assessment calendar, including by ethnicity, sex, disadvantage, EAL and SEND. Pupil Progress meetings will also focus on these learner groups.
- All children are supported to ensure they can access the curriculum, experience success and achieve. This is done utilising a variety of strategies detailed in our 'Closing the Gap Action Plans' which set out the interventions used to accelerate the progress of learners.
- Children who are new to the school are immediately assessed in phonics and reading to ensure they have the necessary foundations in place to read and access the curriculum.
- We will provide opportunities for students to meet people from other cultural, religious and social backgrounds, through taking part in trips and visits, meeting visitors to our school and participating in collaborative partnership projects.
- We will monitor participation by different learner groups in extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, including by SEND and disadvantage.
- Pioneers who throughout history have fought for equality, are celebrated in the curriculum and in whole school celebrations. This includes current-day role models, such as Laura Henry Allain MBE and the Lionesses.

Principle 5: To Tackle Discrimination and Harassment

- We take the view that education is the answer; educate children, staff, and parents about what constitutes discrimination and harassment.
- We will continually develop and communicate clear anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies that explicitly state the school's commitment to inclusivity and zero tolerance for discrimination, in accordance with our Anti-bullying policy.
- We will establish clear and confidential reporting mechanisms for children and staff to report incidents. We will also ensure that students feel safe reporting concerns without fear of retaliation.
- All reports of discrimination or harassment will be promptly and impartially investigated. Appropriate action, which may include disciplinary measures, will then be taken when incidents are substantiated.
- The Behaviour Policy, including the Anti-Bullying Policy, will be reviewed annually to assess the impact and success of both our rewards and sanctions.
- We will monitor recruitment of staff by ethnicity and ensure that all job advertisements include an equal opportunities statement.
- All staff adhere to the staff code of conduct and any new staff receive induction training during which expectations are made clear.

Principle 6: Professional Development

- We will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility to promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom, challenge and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur, identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum, support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language, differentiate learning to ensure that all children can achieve their full potential regardless of their educational needs or disabilities, keep up-to-date with equalities



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legislation relevant to their work and give pupil's the opportunity to have their voices heard with regards to equality issues.

- We will ensure that all staff are familiar with this Policy.
- We will provide training on equality, diversity and community cohesion for all staff.
- We will provide opportunities for staff to develop further expertise in exploring equality, diversity and human rights issues through their own curriculum area.
- We will ensure that governors understand their role in supporting this aspect of the school's work, including their statutory duties.

SAFEGUARDING SUPPORTS OUR EQUALITIES POLICY

Safeguarding is a critical component of any equality policy, as it plays a fundamental role in ensuring the safety, well-being, and equal treatment of all individuals within an organization or community. Here's why safeguarding is important within the context of the Highfield Equalities policy:

1. **Protection of Vulnerable Individuals:** Safeguarding measures are designed to protect vulnerable individuals, including children, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, from harm, abuse, discrimination, and neglect.
2. **Promotion of Inclusivity:** Safeguarding contributes to the creation of a safe and inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of their background, can participate fully and without fear. This aligns with the principles of equality and non-discrimination.
3. **Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment:** Safeguarding measures help prevent discrimination, harassment, and other forms of mistreatment. By addressing and rectifying harmful behaviours, safeguarding reinforces the commitment to equal treatment and respect for everyone.
4. **Legal and Ethical Responsibility:** We have a legal obligation to safeguard the children in our care. Our Equalities Policy includes safeguarding measures to ensure that the organization complies with these legal requirements and upholds its ethical responsibility to protect individuals from harm. The measures include:
 - A curriculum which promotes tolerance, respect and builds pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. This is done in-line with requirements of the Prevent Duty.
 - A commitment to Respect, Equality and Diversity, as outlined in 'Principle 4'.
 - Appropriate training for staff and governors
 - Web filtering systems (Smoothwall) to keep children safe online and a strong commitment to online safety through our computing and PSHE curriculum
 - Policies relating to lettings, visiting speakers in school and external visits
 - Support for vulnerable pupils and clear procedures for referrals
 - Working in partnership with other agencies



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5. Fostering Trust: A robust safeguarding framework fosters trust within the school community. When individuals know that their safety and well-being are a top priority, they are more likely to feel valued and included, contributing to a positive atmosphere that supports equality.

6. Preventing Discriminatory Practices: Safeguarding helps identify and address discriminatory practices that may exist.

7. Accountability and Reporting: clear reporting procedures for suspected abuse or discrimination promotes accountability and ensures that incidents are appropriately investigated and addressed, further reinforcing the principles of equality and fairness.

8. Community and Stakeholder Confidence: By demonstrating a commitment to safeguarding and equality, it enhances Highfield's reputation and gains the confidence of its stakeholders, including parents, guardians, employees, and the broader community.

In summary, safeguarding is integral to our Equalities Policy because it aligns with the core values of fairness, non-discrimination, and the protection of vulnerable individuals. It ensures that everyone, regardless of their characteristics or circumstances, has an equal opportunity to thrive in a safe and inclusive environment.

EQUALITIES ACTION PLAN AND MONITORING

In the light of the principles stated above, we have identified practical priorities and plans of specific action in our Equalities Action Plan. This supports our School Improvement Plan and is reviewed annually by governors. The Equalities Action Plan objectives will be monitored termly as a minimum and alongside the School Improvement Plan. The Equalities Policy will be reviewed annually.

The impact of the Equalities Action Plan and the Equalities Policy are assessed and evaluated through the collection of information and data relating to their implementation and the adjustments made as a result. This includes surveys and data relating to achievement of different learner groups.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with current legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

A dedicated member (Mrs Fatima Bhula) of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.



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The head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff, governors and visitors are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff - Mrs R Homan - has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

Governing Body Approval:

Signed: F Bhula

Position: Equalities Governor

Date: September 2023

Headteacher Approval:

Signed: J Feeley

Date: September 2023

Next Review Date (annual):

September 2024



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

An explanation of the key aspects of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):

1. **Who Does it Apply to?** The PSED applies to public authorities, which include government departments, local government bodies, schools, the police, the National Health Service (NHS), and various other organizations that carry out public functions. It also applies to certain non-public bodies that perform functions of a public nature, such as private companies providing public services under contract.
2. **General Duty:** The PSED consists of a general duty, which requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimization based on protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
 - Advance equality of opportunity among 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.
3. **Specific Duties:** In addition to the general duty, public authorities subject to the PSED must also comply with specific duties. These specific duties require public authorities to:
 - Publish information demonstrating their compliance with the general duty, which includes data on workforce diversity, equality objectives, and information about how they engage with the public regarding equality issues.
 - Set specific, measurable equality objectives at regular intervals. These objectives should address the most significant inequalities and disparities within their service provision and functions.
4. **Integration into Decision-Making:** The PSED is not merely a paperwork exercise. Public authorities are expected to integrate considerations of equality and diversity into their decision-making processes, policies, and practices. This means that they must actively assess how their actions and policies may impact different groups within society and take steps to mitigate any adverse effects on protected characteristics.
5. **Consultation and Engagement:** Public authorities are encouraged to engage with the public and relevant stakeholders to gather input and feedback on their equality objectives and policies. This ensures that the views and needs of different communities and demographics are considered when shaping public services and functions.
6. **Transparency and Accountability:** The publication of information and progress reports on equality objectives and compliance with the PSED helps ensure transparency and accountability. It allows the public and oversight bodies to monitor the efforts of public authorities in promoting equality and diversity.
7. **Enforcement:** The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the PSED. The EHRC has the authority to take legal action against public authorities that fail to meet their obligations under the Act.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a crucial component of the UK's equality legislation, emphasizing the importance of proactively promoting equality and preventing discrimination in the public sector. By requiring public authorities to assess and address inequalities and engage with diverse communities, it aims to create a more inclusive and equitable society.



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Appendix 2

Here are the key aspects and provisions of the Equality Act 2010:

- 1. Protected Characteristics:** The Act defines nine protected characteristics. These are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 2. Prohibited Discrimination:** The Act prohibits various forms of discrimination based on these protected characteristics. The types of discrimination covered include direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimization.
- 3. Public Sector Equality Duty:** Public authorities, including government departments and local government bodies, are required to meet a public sector equality duty. This duty involves considering the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4. Reasonable Adjustments for Disabilities:** Employers and service providers are required to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This ensures that disabled individuals have equal access to employment, goods, services, and facilities.
- 5. Positive Action:** In certain circumstances, the Act allows for positive action to address disadvantages or underrepresentation of specific groups. This means that organizations can take specific actions to promote equality and diversity, such as providing targeted training or support.
- 6. Equal Pay:** The Act includes provisions related to equal pay, ensuring that men and women are paid equally for equal work.
- 7. Education:** The Act covers educational institutions and prohibits discrimination in admissions, treatment, and access to educational services.
- 8. Housing:** It also addresses discrimination in housing and renting, making it illegal for landlords and property providers to discriminate against tenants or potential tenants based on protected characteristics.
- 9. Workplace Discrimination:** Employers are prohibited from discriminating against employees based on protected characteristics, both during the hiring process and throughout employment. The Act also covers issues related to equal pay, harassment, and victimization in the workplace.
- 10. Goods and Services:** Service providers, such as businesses and public services, are prohibited from discriminating against customers or clients based on protected characteristics.



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11. **Associative and Perceptive Discrimination:** The Act extends protection to individuals who are discriminated against because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.
12. **Gender Pay Gap Reporting:** Certain employers are required to report on their gender pay gap, helping to highlight and address disparities in pay between male and female employees.
13. **Compliance and Enforcement:** The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for promoting and enforcing compliance with the Act. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against can also take legal action.

The Equality Act 2010 is a significant piece of legislation aimed at promoting fairness, equality, and non-discrimination in various aspects of life in the UK. Its provisions are designed to protect individuals with protected characteristics from discrimination and to ensure that organizations and institutions actively work toward creating a more inclusive and equal society.

Appendix 3

Tackling discrimination and harassment in schools is of paramount importance for several compelling reasons:

1. **Promotes Inclusivity and Equity:** Addressing discrimination and harassment creates an inclusive school environment where all students, regardless of their backgrounds, feel welcome and valued. It ensures that every student has an equal opportunity to learn and thrive.
2. **Protects Students' Well-Being:** Discrimination and harassment can have profound negative effects on students' mental and emotional well-being. By tackling these issues, schools help protect students from harm and create a safe and supportive atmosphere.
3. **Enhances Academic Performance:** A positive school environment free from discrimination and harassment fosters better concentration and learning outcomes. When students feel safe and respected, they are more likely to excel academically.
4. **Fosters Social and Emotional Development:** Schools play a crucial role in shaping students' social and emotional development. Tackling discrimination and harassment helps nurture empathy, tolerance, and respect among students, which are essential life skills.
5. **Promotes Positive Relationships:** Addressing these issues early on teaches students how to build and maintain positive relationships based on mutual respect. These skills are valuable throughout their lives.
6. **Prepares Students for a Diverse World:** In today's globalized society, students will encounter people from diverse backgrounds in their personal and professional lives. Schools that tackle discrimination and harassment prepare students to navigate this diversity with respect and understanding.
7. **Legal and Ethical Obligations:** Schools have legal and ethical obligations to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all students. This includes compliance with anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws.
8. **Prevents Long-Term Consequences:** Discrimination and harassment can have long-lasting effects on individuals, contributing to low self-esteem, mental health issues, and even long-



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term economic disadvantages. By addressing these issues early, schools can help prevent these negative consequences.

9. **Builds a Positive School Culture:** Tackling discrimination and harassment contributes to a positive school culture where students, teachers, and staff collaborate, support one another, and take pride in their community.
10. **Reduces Bullying and Violence:** Discrimination and harassment can escalate into bullying or violence. Addressing these issues proactively can help reduce incidents of bullying and violence in schools.
11. **Engages Parents and Communities:** Schools that address discrimination and harassment often engage parents and the broader community in these efforts. This collaboration strengthens the school's ability to create an inclusive environment.
12. **Sets a Lifelong Example:** Students learn not only from what they are taught but also from the actions and values modelled by adults. Schools that address discrimination and harassment set an example that students can carry with them throughout their lives.
13. **Promotes Social Justice and Equity:** By addressing discrimination and harassment, schools contribute to broader societal goals of social justice and equity. They teach students the importance of standing up against unfairness and advocating for equal rights.