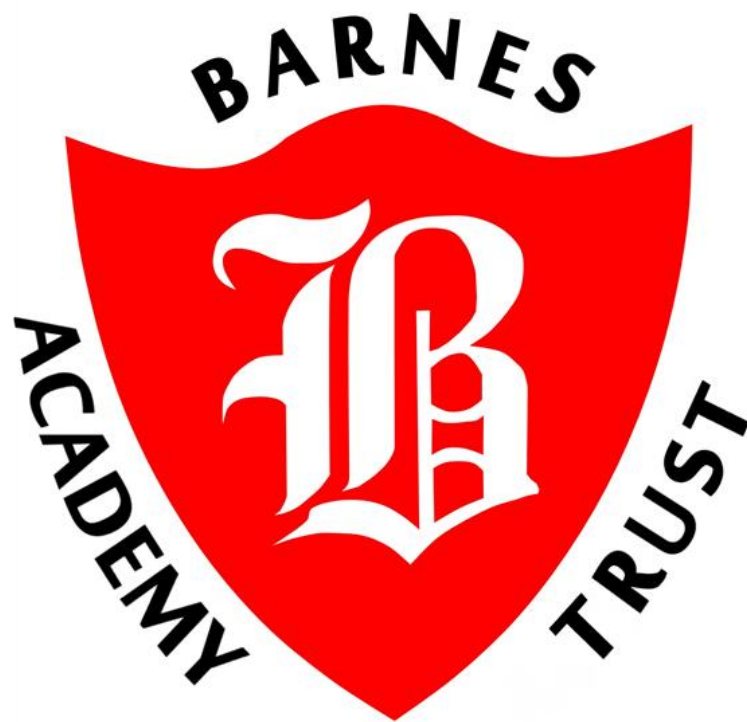


Equality and Diversity Policy



Date : November 2024

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POLICY STATEMENT

Our aim is to have a great school and a happy, strong community so that people have better lives. We do this by:

- ☒ Always doing what is right
- ☒ Trusting in each other
- ☒ Doing what we know makes the difference

Doing what is right means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others and being honest, open and transparent.

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. Barnes Infant Academy is fully committed to eliminating unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings. Barnes Infant Academy will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender identity/reassignment, gender dysphoria, transgender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

As an educational establishment, we are well positioned to educate not only our pupils, but our staff and the communities we serve. It is our aspiration to build a culture where difference is valued, understood and respected.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

There are statutory requirements detailed under the following legislation:

- ☒ The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- ☒ 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

Barnes Infant Academy has an equality, diversity and inclusion action plan that goes beyond our statutory requirements, and in developing this policy the Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools has also been considered.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities, to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years
- information to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty annually

This policy represents a commitment to a common set of values and objectives. All staff at Barnes Infant Academy are committed to advancing and achieving equality of opportunity for all, and we believe that everyone is entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our community. All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and could be managed in line with Barnes Infant Academy's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

The aim of this policy is to:

- develop an ethos which respects and values all people
- actively advance equality of opportunity
- prepare pupils to embrace a life in a diverse society
- promote good relations amongst people within the communities within which we work
- eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour across Barnes Infant Academy
- deliver equality and diversity through our school policies, procedures, training and practice
- make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to school provision and activities
- take effective action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural misconceptions
- monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within our schools
- ensure that our policies and procedures are fair, transparent and in line with our culture and ethos, and our legal and statutory responsibilities
- ☑ ensure decisions, behaviours and actions align with our ethical leadership framework

The policy applies to all employees, pupils, members, trustees and governors. The policy underpins school policies and procedures.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trust Board is responsible for approving this policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently. The Board will ensure that Barnes Infant Academy's published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years.

The Trust Board delegates responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives and their impact in our school to the Headteacher and Local Governing Body (LGBs).

The Trust Board are responsible for ensuring that all stakeholders adhere to this policy. They will ensure that suspected breaches are investigated and breaches are managed swiftly, effectively, fairly and consistently.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy and associated procedures. They will also ensure that this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

Leaders and managers must ensure they implement this policy fairly and equitably, seeking guidance, clarification and support as and when required.

All employees must promote equality and diversity, and they must actively respond to any incidents of unfair discrimination related to protected characteristics perpetuated by pupils, staff or visitors. If employees have queries or concerns, they may wish to speak to their line manager or HR for further advice and guidance.

The Trust Board, Local Governing Body and Headteacher are responsible for monitoring the application of this policy within school, ensuring our school has inclusive learning and working environments, providing a high-profile lead on equality and diversity, advancing equality and diversity inside and outside school. They must ensure school policies and procedures comply with all equality legislation.

Pupils are responsible for respecting others in their language, behaviours and actions and they must adhere to our equality and diversity policies, procedures and practices.

3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Barnes Infant Academy is committed to:

- ☑ Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines
- ☑ Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its pupil population and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged

☒ Ensuring anyone with a protected characteristic as described within the Equality Act 2010 does not experience discrimination (e.g. age, disability, sex, gender identity/reassignment, gender dysphoria, transgender, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership).

☒ Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

☒ Encouraging people to bring their whole, authentic self to work and school, with the knowledge that Barnes Infant Academy values difference and diversity.

Equality impact assessments enable Barnes Infant Academy to consider any direct or indirect impact a policy, procedure, guide or change might have on people with protected characteristics. Evidence gathering can assist with monitoring and evaluation processes (e.g. trend analysis) to assist Barnes Infant Academy in understanding if an unintended impact has occurred. Equality impact assessments support evidence-based decisions, transparency and consideration of equality issues.

The objectives detailed in section 5 highlight the priority areas that require attention, enabling Barnes Infant Academy to strengthen its approach in these areas over the next few years.

4. OUR DUTY

We are aware of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and whilst Barnes Infant Academy complies with nondiscrimination provisions it aims to go above and beyond legal and statutory requirements to ensure school operates in a climate where difference is valued and understood, where everyone experiences equal opportunities and where everyone feels part of an inclusive community.

Policies include reference to the importance of promoting equality and diversity and employees of Barnes Infant Academy are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings and via training and development. New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction.

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, Barnes Infant Academy 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, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)

☒ Taking steps to meet the 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 (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

Barnes Infant Academy aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

☒ Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.

☒ 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 communities. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies and organising school trips and activities based around the local community. This also includes encouraging staff to attend assemblies as part of their learning and development, and to act as role models for pupils.

☒ Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any tensions which may arise between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, school councils have representatives from different year groups and are formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs our schools work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

☒ Encourage participation when representation is disproportionately low.

We continue to develop links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

Barnes Infant Academy considers equality, diversity and inclusion in its decision-making, and our schools always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, our schools considers whether the trip:

☒ Cuts across any religious holidays

☒ Is accessible to pupils with disabilities

☒ Has equivalent facilities for all

The school keeps a written record of assessments to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

Barnes Infant Academy is required to publish information relating to those who share a relevant protected characteristic who are affected by our policies and practices. This means we are required to publish the demographic information for our school for the 9 protected characteristics, for pupils and staff, ensuring that individuals aren't identifiable through the data we publish. As well as protected characteristics, we aim to improve inclusion, therefore this policy not only considers our legal and statutory obligations, but also considers how Barnes Infant Academy can become more inclusive. For example, the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan includes socio-economic background and class, recognising that this can have an adverse impact on a pupil's ability to fully engage in all school activities and opportunities.

We aim to create a culture of acceptance, utilising whole school training sessions to raise awareness and educate staff and pupils on the use of appropriate language. Wider stakeholder involvement will enable pupil and staff voice to influence the development and implementation of meaningful, effective action plans that include the curriculum, pastoral activities, workforce and culture.

We aim to advance equality of opportunity and we publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing. This data is analysed to determine strengths and areas for improvement, and appropriate actions are implemented in response to the information collated. Barnes Infant Academy also considers trends in data and makes evidence available for identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying).

5. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives should align with Barnes Infant Academy school priorities. They should be achievable, considering the size and circumstances of the school. In developing our objectives we have considered the following potential aims:

- increase participation
- narrow gaps in performance
- reduce exclusion rates

- increase understanding between religious groups
- reduce number of homophobic incidents
- raise attainment in a specific subject
- encourage non-stereotyped career options
- anticipate needs of incoming pupils from a new group, such as Traveller children.

Our objectives for 2024-2027 are to:

1. Reduce the incidence of gender bias.
2. Reduce the impact of social deprivation, socio-economic status and class and improve the involvement of pupils affected by these issues.
3. Acknowledge the inequalities and challenges women at work face, and look to reduce those inequalities and challenges, increasing understanding and equipping staff through education, signposting and support.
4. Increasing opportunities for flexible working, including flexible working in adverts and encouraging staff and managers to consider options for flexible working for the diverse range of roles we have across our organisation.

6. BREACHES

If an employee feels that any member of the organisation has not treated them in accordance with this policy, they have right of complaint via Barnes' Infant Academy Grievance Procedure. Where an individual not employed by Barnes Infant Academy feels an employee of the academy has discriminated against them, they should refer to Barnes Infant Academy's Complaints Procedure.

7. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

Effectiveness and compliance of this policy will be monitored on an annual basis.

8. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years