



Ysgol Feithrin Fairoak

Equalities Policy

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Introduction

School Characteristics

Fairoak Nursery School is located on the eastern side of the City of Newport in a densely populated area a short distance from the city centre. There have been some significant changes to the school population in the past few years with significantly more children coming from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and living in supported housing.

The nursery currently caters for 144 three to four year old children [including 'Rising Threes'] who start in nursery on a phased intake over a period of a fortnight, with most children attending part-time for either the morning or afternoon session. Although its intake represents a wide range of ability, increasing numbers of children display social and behavioural problems with many displaying complex linguistic needs.

Approximately 63% of all children in the school speak mainly English at home. Other languages spoken at home by children include Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Slovakian, Czech, Turkish, Spanish, Kurdish, Lithuanian, Malayalam, Arabic and Amharic. Many children from ethnic minority backgrounds have at least one of their parents who are second generation Welsh, some having been born in Newport. No child speaks Welsh as a first language.

A 'Flying Start' group for two year olds operates on the same site and these children enter the playgroup when they are two years old as part of a scheme targeting children in specific areas of Wales recognised as needing additional support by the Welsh Government. There are currently 48 children attending either morning or afternoon sessions.

The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in July 2008, the Healthy Schools Phase 4 Award was achieved in 2014 and the Eco Schools Platinum Award was also achieved in 2014. Both the IDEA awards 1 & 2 were assessed as giving outstanding provision for equalities in 2010.

The nursery is fortunate to have very supportive parents who contribute to its success.

Purposes

The purposes of this policy are to:

- establish and implement good practice in equalities across all areas of school life
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality and good relations between members of the school community and visitors to the school.

Summary Statement

The school is committed to promoting equality and fostering respect for people irrespective of sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, faith, disability/impairment, age or language. The school values and encourages involvement of people from all sections of the local community. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Language or behaviour that is homophobic, sexist, racist, offensive to the disabled and prejudicial language that is potentially damaging to any person or group will not be tolerated and will be challenged. The school recognises that British and Welsh society, and the school itself, is made up of people from many different backgrounds. It is important that all children, staff, stakeholders and visitors to the school can enjoy life in such a diverse society.

Principles

A fundamental principle of our school is that it cultivates a very positive, inclusive ethos that this policy will support and help to maintain. In adhering to this principle, the school aims to:

- make the school a place where visitors, staff, stakeholders and children feel welcome and valued
- ensure that all children achieve their best
- ensure that all staff are able to contribute fully to the school's work
- meet the diverse needs of children and prepare all children for life in a diverse society
- respect and value differences between people and promote good relations between everyone within the school and the wider community
- ensure that equality of opportunity is an integral part of planning and decision-making across all areas of the school
- be proactive in tackling and eliminating discrimination,
- protect the rights of all children, staff, parents, governors, stakeholders and visitors to the school
- comply with and uphold the spirit of the relevant all relevant legislation – see legislation summary documents-see legislation summary document

Procedures

1. Leadership, Management and Governance

Commitment

The governing body and management of the school will work in partnership with others to be proactive in promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and in promoting good relations. They will encourage, support and enable all children and staff to reach the highest standards.

Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities including those arising from relevant legislation. With assistance from the headteacher, the governing body will ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies, are implemented. The Governing Body includes equal opportunities issues as regular items on the agenda of Governing Body meetings and has a governor with responsibility for equal opportunities.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible, with the governing body, for ensuring that the Equalities Policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and that they are given appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities. The Headteacher will take disciplinary action against staff or children who are found to have discriminated on homophobic, disability, gender religious or racial grounds.

People with specific responsibilities

The named persons with responsibility for dealing with reported incidents of racial discrimination are Mrs Andie O'Brien (Headteacher] and Mrs Sian Edwards TLR3. The named persons ensure that all reported racist incidents are recorded in a register and that Racist Incident Report forms are completed and sent on to the Local Authority (LA).

The named persons ensure that the school regularly reviews and evaluates all policies and practices in relation to equalities leading to the setting of targets which promote equality and address apparent aspects of inequality or disadvantage in all of the school's activities. The co-ordinator also

has a key role in contributing to the Inclusion, Diversity, Equalities Award (IDEA) self evaluation process alongside other staff.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation, including attending appropriate training and information events. The school aims to give staff regular training to deal with equalities and to promote familiarity with the Equalities policy in order to identify and challenge racial and other forms of bias and stereotyping. All staff have a role to play in the IDEA self evaluation process

Teachers and Teaching Assistants ensure that all children have the opportunity to have full access to the curriculum and are included in all activities. Through their teaching and relations with children, parents, staff and the wider community, staff promote equality of opportunity and understanding of diversity.

Visitors and contractors working on site

Every effort is made to ensure that all visitors are made aware of the school's policies on equal opportunities, race equality and racial harassment. All contractors are required to commit to adhering to these policies during initial contract negotiations.

Breaches of policy

A complaint about the non-compliance with this policy is dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure. Specific incidents of racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation involving members of staff are dealt with in accordance with the school's Grievance Procedures.

It is recommended that the Governing Body review its complaint policy/procedure to ensure that it references the Equalities policy.

Planning and Review of all School Policies

Policy planning and development

It is intended that IDEA be used to assess equality impact when planning and developing school policies. Any issues arising from equal opportunity questions and audits are addressed through associated action plans or targets in the School Development Plan. Whenever possible, a broad range of people including staff, parents, children and other relevant stakeholders are involved in consultation on policy development.

Ethnic, gender and disability monitoring

The school is moving towards the critical use of ethnic and gender monitoring data to identify possible patterns and trends that may inform planning and decision-making with an emphasis on attainment. The school plans to put strategies in place to address disparities. Ethnic and gender monitoring is carried out on a range of issues affecting both children and staff.

Reviewing and evaluating policies

The school has an aim that policies and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in 1) eliminating discrimination, 2) promoting equality of opportunity, and 3) promoting good relations. It is an aim that audits and questions on equality are built into school self-review and evaluation frameworks using IDEA as a source of guidance. Issues arising are used to inform planning and decision-making.

Publishing results of monitoring and evaluations

Required ethnic monitoring data is made available to the LA. Relevant information from audits and monitoring is included in the school's Annual Report. To conform to the Data Protection Act steps are taken to ensure that information cannot be used to identify individuals.

3. Implementing the Equalities Policy

Targets

Targets for action linked to this policy are to be included in the School's Development Plan.

Evaluations

It is an aim of the school that evaluations of these targets are carried out annually. The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated in meeting the general requirements of the relevant legislation.

Review

This Equalities Policy will be reviewed annually and will undergo a major review in three years' time (2017).

Training and development

To facilitate implementation of the Equalities Policy, it is an aim that all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and as many governors as possible receive training on the implications of the relevant legislation for their roles in school. It is a further aim that regular ongoing training is organised through LA and school-based training sessions. All training is evaluated.

Communicating and promoting the policy

This policy will be part of the 'Policies & Procedures and Staff handbook' that is issued to all staff and Governors at Fair Oak Nursery School. Further copies can be obtained from the Head Teacher.

The full Equalities Policy will be:

- published on the school's website
- brought to the attention of all non-LA contractors or service providers, as necessary,
- available on request for parents, visitors and members of the wider community

The school will endeavour to make the Equalities Policy available in other accessible formats on request.

4. Consulting on the Equal Opportunities Policy

A final draft of this policy will be produced following consultation with the following people and groups:

- The school's Equalities Working Group (including teaching and non-teaching staff)
- All staff within the school
- The school's governing body
- Local authority Equalities staff.

Similar consultation will take place when the policy is next reviewed.

Promoting equality and eliminating discrimination across areas of school activity.

a) Admissions and Attendance

Admissions

Children's gender and information about all children's ethnicity, home language, religion and dietary requirements is collected through admission forms and entered on the school database.

Attendance

We expect good attendance of all children and work together with staff, children, parents and stakeholders to ensure that high levels of attendance are maintained. The school has a well-established procedure for dealing with absences. Unexplained absences will be followed up with telephone calls and, in more serious cases and home visits. Staff who follow up absence are aware of and sensitive to relevant cultural and religious issues.

We recognise children's and staff members' right to take time off for religious observance and make provision for children on extended leave to cover missed work.

b) Attainment, Progress and Assessment

Attainment and Progress

Our aim is to ensure that all children achieve to the highest standards. We value many forms of personal and academic achievement. We monitor individual children's attainment and progress and are developing the use of ethnic monitoring to identify any differences between the performances of ethnic groups. We aim to address disparities through planned and targeted support.

We aim to ensure all parents and children are aware of the commitment of the school to equality of opportunity and that children and their families are aware of particular staff they can turn to in the event of issues regarding sexual orientation, race, gender, disabilities or religion.

Assessment

We aim to ensure that all children are appropriately supported in assessments, and that minority ethnic children, those for whom English is an additional language, traveller and refugee and asylum seeker children are not disadvantaged through cultural and linguistic bias or lack of support. The school is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the curriculum and extra-curricular activities are available to all. In particular the school aims to ensure that disabled children, parents, stakeholders and visitors have full access to all appropriate areas of the school and school activities.

Special Educational Needs

We aim to make sure that accurate assessments of special educational needs are made for minority ethnic children, those for whom English is an additional language, traveller and refugee and asylum seeker children. We aim to ensure that all children with additional educational needs receive appropriate support.

c) Discrimination, Harassment, Abuse and School Ethos

Discrimination and Harassment

We are opposed to all forms of homophobic, sexist and racial prejudice, harassment and discrimination. We are similarly opposed to discrimination and harassment on the grounds of disabilities of any kind. The use of associated language or behaviour is not tolerated and will be challenged. All incidents are dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures and, where appropriate, LA guidelines on dealing with Racist Incidents. Incidents involving staff as alleged

perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with the school's Discipline or Grievance procedures. The school works closely with the LA to address racism within the school.

Celebrating and catering for diversity

We take every care to ensure the specific cultural and religious needs of all groups are addressed in school. Advice is sought on catering for the dietary and dress requirements of different ethnic and religious groups. The school enables children and staff to observe festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all children, parents and stakeholders to understand and respect such festivals and events.

Preparation for life in a multi-ethnic society

We encourage all children and their parents to understand, respect and value peoples, cultures and faiths with which they are unfamiliar and foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. We actively promote good personal and community relations in order to prepare all children for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society.

d) Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

Behaviour and Discipline

We expect high standards of behaviour of all children. All children are treated fairly, consistently and without discrimination when being disciplined for disruptive behaviour. The school recognises that cultural background may affect behaviour and takes this into account. (An example of this is fasting). Incidents where the principles of this policy are transgressed are dealt with firmly and consistently and allegations of discrimination and harassment or provocation are fully investigated.

Exclusion

The school uses a range of strategies that aim to address the needs of all children.

It is recommended that the Governing Body review its behaviour policy to ensure that it references the equality policy, and defines that fixed term and permanent exclusion are options available to the Headteacher where children have contravened the school behaviour policy.

e) Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support

Our pastoral support seeks to take account of differences in sexual orientation, gender, physical attributes and difficulties. Our pastoral support takes into account religious and ethnic differences and it is intended that staff should become increasingly aware of the experiences of the victims of homophobia, traveller, refugee and asylum seeker children. Victims and perpetrators of incidents of discrimination are counselled, where it is felt necessary, and children are taught ways of responding appropriately to such incidents.

Support for EAL and traveller children

We endeavour to provide appropriate support for children for whom English is an additional language and traveller children, and encourage them to use and develop their home languages, where possible.

f) Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning

We take positive steps to ensure that all children can participate and feel that their contributions are valued. All teachers are aware of their children's cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs and teach about different cultural traditions with sensitivity. We encourage children of all backgrounds to work

together with co-operation and understanding, learning from each other's varied experiences. Our teaching seeks to challenge prejudice and stereotypes, and we try to foster children's critical awareness of bias, inequality and injustice to help them identify and challenge the forms of discrimination.

g) Curriculum

Promoting cultural diversity through the curriculum

We have as an aim the recognition and understanding of cultural diversity in all curriculum areas through teaching a balance of positive, culturally diverse content. Principles of equality and respect for people of different sexual orientation, gender, physical and intellectual ability and of different racial and ethnic groups are present throughout the curriculum and children are given opportunities to explore issues of identity, equality in the appropriate curriculum areas. We evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum for children of all groups and, where appropriate, have as an aim, to monitor its effectiveness in promoting understanding of diversity.

Curriculum access

We make every effort to ensure that all children have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking account of their individual cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs, physical and intellectual abilities and by differentiating work appropriately.

Resources

Our resources and displays portray positive images of a range of peoples and cultures. We have as a central aim that appropriate resources are purchased to meet the needs of individual children including those for whom English is an additional language, travellers and refugee and asylum seeker children. Resources and displays are regularly reviewed and upgraded and we use a variety of resources to challenge stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and prejudice across the curriculum.

Involvement of people of diverse backgrounds

We seek to use role models and presenters from a range of different racial, ethnic and faith groups within the school to share a wide range of skills and experiences. We recognise the ideal where children, staff, stakeholders and visitors feel safe and welcome in the school regardless of sexual orientation, gender, abilities, race, ethnic background or religion.

h) Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

Recruitment and Promotion

All governors and staff involved in recruitment and selection endeavour to ensure equality and to avoid discrimination in the recruitment and selection process. All teaching and non-teaching posts are formally advertised, and may be advertised through minority press to encourage members of under-represented groups to apply. All application forms for all posts must be returned to the LEA HR team who monitor the ethnicity and gender of applicants for posts.

People from all sections of the school community are encouraged to stand for election to the governing body, with posters and flyers advertising in a variety of different languages.

Professional Development

All staff are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities. It is intended that training of all staff and governors address issues of equality of opportunity, cultural diversity and the needs of children for whom English is an additional language, travellers and refugee and asylum seeker children.

i) Partnerships with Parents, Carers and Communities

Parents, carers and the wider community

We have as an aim to make greater use of the expertise, skills and knowledge of people of a range of backgrounds, from the local and wider community, to develop positive attitudes regarding sexual orientation, gender, abilities, race, ethnic background or religion and cultural diversity. Parents and carers are always informed of specific (racist) incidents of discrimination, abuse or harassment. We aim to do more to encourage parents and carers of all backgrounds to participate in the life of the school and to take steps to encourage greater involvement of under-represented groups. We aim to be able to produce, on request, information for parents in user-friendly language and accessible formats. We would like to be in a position where Welsh, Braille, community language translation and interpretation could be used to communicate and consult with parents and carers as appropriate.

School premises

School premises are well used by members of the local community.

Contractors and service providers

We expect all contractors and visitors to the school to be treated in a manner that is consistent with this policy. Equal opportunity standards are incorporated into all contracts with service providers such as catering, cleaning and building maintenance.

This policy will be reviewed whenever necessary, and at least on an annual basis

Reviewed September 2011

Reviewed November 2011

Reviewed February 2012

Reviewed October 2012 & 2013

Reviewed October 2014

Reviewed September 2015

Reviewed November 2016