



LONGWELL GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

## EQUALITIES and COHESION POLICY

Date of policy: March 2010  
Responsibility: Headteacher  
Date of review: March 2013

### **1 Introduction**

This Equality Policy sets out the school's approach to promoting community cohesion, equality and diversity. It covers disability, gender and race/ethnicity, in response to the statutory duties on schools to publish disability and gender equality schemes and a race equality policy.

### **2 Statement of principles**

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and governors of Longwell Green School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include: -

- Pupils
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Parents/carers
- Community governors
- Multi-agency staff linked to the staff i.e. AEN services staff, school improvement services staff, school attendance service
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Longwell Green School, equality is a key principle for treating all people the same irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, age or another recognised area of discrimination.

### **2 What sort of school are we?**

The school provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by the ethnic diversity, culture and faith of its citizens.

The primary focus of education is to increase life chances. At Longwell Green School we need to be aware of some specific issues to ensure we promote the life chances of all children:

- We currently have very small numbers of children from black and ethnic minorities
- We have small numbers of children with special needs or in receipt of free school meals

These two factors may mean that the needs of small groups are overlooked in the interests of supporting the majority.

- We also have large numbers of boys in most year groups who can dominate class interaction

This factor may mean that girls are overlooked in the classroom which can limit their learning and social development.

However, the school has had a strong ethos of inclusivity which means that it seeks to challenge any institutionalised lack of opportunity.

### **3 Aims and values**

Equality of opportunity is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

It is based on the following core school values:

Learning at Longwell Green is GREAT-  
**G**rowth for all; **R**espect for all; **E**njoyment for all; **A**mbition for all; in a spirit of  
**T**ogetherness

These values are designed to ensure that the school **meets** the needs of all, and **celebrates** the achievements of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we value cultural diversity, meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion and ensure that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

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

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

### **4. Relevant legislation supporting this policy**

- The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Race Relations Act (1976)
- The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)
- The Human Rights Act (2000)
- The Children's Act (2004)
- The European Directives

- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The respective Codes of Practice associated with the legislation
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (duty to promote community cohesion)

## **5. The School's commitment to Race Equality**

The National Curriculum encourages schools to:

“prepare all pupils for life in a world where they will meet, live and work with people of different cultures, religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds.”

The school strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

We recognise:

- The inclusive nature of the National Curriculum 2000 and the opportunities Citizenship presents for encouraging ‘respect for diversity’
- The importance of celebrating festivals from diverse faiths.
- That minority ethnic groups include Gypsy Travellers, Refugees and Asylum – seekers and less visible minority groups eg Irish
- The important contribution immigrants and their descendents have made to Britain
- The importance of Global Citizenship
- The importance of strong home/school and wider community links
- Our duty under the Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000) to actively promote race equality
- The recommendations of the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence: “That Local Education Authorities and school governors have the duty to create and implement strategies in school to prevent and address racism” (Recommendation 68).

**The definition of institutional racism is** “the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, colour or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtless and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people”.

**A racist incident is** “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim of any other person”

Longwell Green School will not tolerate racial harassment of any kind. We are committed to combating racial discrimination

### **Actions to ensure Race Equality**

- a) Monitor pupils by ethnic group (See Monitoring by Ethnicity below).
- b) The school will take steps to monitor and further develop good practice
- c) We shall adhere to South Gloucestershire LA’s guidance on Dealing with and Reporting Racial Incidents
- d) All class teachers/tutors will be trained in the care and support of pupils who have experienced racial abuse.

e) The school will endeavour to ensure that the governing body and staff reflects the local community it serves

## **6. The school's commitment to disability equality**

The aim of our school is to ensure that wherever possible disabled people have the same opportunities as non-disabled people and to prevent any form of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that statutory duties are met:

not to treat disabled pupils and prospective pupils less favourably than other non-disabled pupils

to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage

In addition, steps will be taken to ensure that employees and those working with the school's authority:

support the governing body in meeting their duties

do not act in such a way that renders the governing body liable to a claim of discrimination

Staff and those working with the authority of the school are made aware of the basic requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Code of Practice for Schools.

There will be occasions where the treatment of disabled children is different from non-disabled students. In such cases the school will be able to demonstrate that such treatment is justified. The reason for the different treatment will be both material to the circumstances of the particular case and substantial (e.g. health and safety reasons). The school will also demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to avoid the disabled pupil being placed at a significant disadvantage.

Careful consideration will be given to how participation can be best facilitated. A number of factors may be part of this consideration including:

the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards

the financial resources available

the cost of taking a particular step

the extent it is practicable to take a particular step

health and safety requirements

the interest of other pupils

The consideration of these factors may lead to the adoption of certain reasonable adjustments rather than others.

We recognise that the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students is anticipatory. To meet this duty we will review policies, practices and procedures to ensure that we do not discriminate against disabled pupils.

Examples of the specific measures we will be taking include:

ensuring providers of facilities for school trips and extra curricular activities can accommodate disabled pupils before making bookings in advance

reviewing staffing arrangements to ensure that the school is in a position to administer medication if required in exceptional circumstances

ensuring there are special arrangements in place for disabled pupils who are taking examinations

ensuring our policies and procedures for bullying cover issues of disability

working closely with parents and disabled pupils to identify potential barriers to participation and devising reasonable adjustments to overcome them

ensuring that staff are briefed on the Disability Code of Practice for schools issued by the Disability Rights Commission

We will also take reasonable steps to find out whether prospective or existing pupils

have a disability. This will include:

- creating an ethos and culture which is open and welcoming so that parents and pupils feel comfortable about sharing information about the disability
- asking parents during the admissions process about the existence of any disability
- providing continuing opportunities to share information (e.g. when seeking permission to go on a school trip)
- monitoring levels of participation, achievement and behaviour that may indicate a disability that has not been identified and referring the matter to specialist agencies

Our school believes that improving access to education and educational achievement by disabled pupils:

- ensures equality of opportunity
- encourages full participation in society
- improves the likelihood of independent living and economic self-sufficiency in the future

We believe that disabled people should be valued for what they can do rather than labelled for what they cannot.

- We improve the accessibility of the physical environment within the resources available in response to needs arising.
- We identify and monitor the performance of different groups of pupils: boys/girls; minority ethnic groups; SEN; disabled pupils; "Looked After" pupils; EAL; free school meals; chronic medical conditions.
- Assessment procedures take into account the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and its Toolkit; the needs of EAL pupils; the needs of minority ethnic pupils; the needs of FSM pupils.
- We have procedures for involving all parents/carers in their children's learning and we monitor this involvement and the outcomes.
- We have procedures for involving all pupils in their own learning and we monitor this involvement and the outcomes.
- Educational inclusion is an integral part of the school development programmes, continuous professional development and governors' meetings.
- We deploy resources to pupils with SEN in excess of the expectations of the SEN Code of Practice 2001

## **7. The school commitment to gender equality**

The school promotes equality of opportunity between males and females and endeavours to eliminate all unlawful sex discrimination and harassment. Conditions for learning (eg. environment, teaching and learning, resources, social and emotional aspects of learning) provide equal access and opportunities to both boys and girls.

## **8. The school's commitment to community cohesion**

The school welcomes the need to promote community cohesion at four different levels:

- The school as a community
- The community within which the school is located
- The UK community
- The global community

These dimensions have direct relevance for meeting Every Child Matters outcomes. The school operates as a community itself and its cohesiveness will have a powerful influence on those who spend time there. Through its work and partnerships across different groups we strive to promote cohesion and provide a common point of communication for a wide range of people. We believe that equipping young people to make a positive contribution, to care for and contribute to their communities, to understand human rights and gain an international perspective all go towards developing responsible young citizens who support cohesion.

## **9. Leadership and Management**

All school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including race equality, and community cohesion.

The governing body and school management set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to:

- equality for all members of the school community
- celebrating all members of the school community and the diversity of the wider community

The school promotes positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

The school management will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity, oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

All staff contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes appropriate steps to enable the contribution of parents.

The evaluation of policies is used to identify specific actions to address equality issues.

Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for minority ethnic and Traveller pupils) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

## **10. Staffing: Recruitment and Professional Development**

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures, which are fair, equal, and in line with statutory duties and LA guidelines.

Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

## **11. Curriculum**

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls;
- pupils learning English as an additional language;
- pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- pupils who are gifted and talented;
- pupils with special educational needs;
- pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

## **12. Teaching and Learning**

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes into account pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.

## **13. Assessment, Pupil Achievement and Progress**

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

The monitoring and analysing of pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and background enables the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupils' progress.

#### **14. School Ethos**

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.

The school seeks to cater for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant school policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.

#### **15. Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions**

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

There are strategies to reintegrate long term truants and excluded pupils which address the needs of all pupils.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

#### **16. Personal Development and Pastoral Care**

Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum seeker children.

The school provides appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

The school takes account of and meets the needs of Traveller pupils.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

#### **17. Admissions and Attendance**

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance which includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision is made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance is monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

#### **18. Partnership with Parents and the Community**

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

The school takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under represented groups of parents and sections of the community.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

### **19. Responsibilities**

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equalities and cohesion agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

**The Governing Body** is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities and cohesion legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's Equalities and Cohesion policy is maintained and updated regularly;
- That procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The named Equality and Cohesion Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all racist incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to all said incidents

**The Headteacher and School Leadership Team** is responsible for:

- Along with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equalities and Cohesion Policy;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, this Policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

**All staff** are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Not discriminating on grounds of race, disability, or other equality issues;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

## **20. Information and resources**

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

## **21. Religious observance**

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## **22. Breaches of the policy**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

## **23. Action plans**

We ensure that the commitments embodied in our aims and values permeate the full range of policies and procedures:

- Equal opportunities;
- Pupils' progress attainment and assessment;
- Behaviour discipline and exclusions;
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- Teaching and learning;
- Induction;
- Admissions and attendance;
- The curriculum;
- All subjects;
- Teaching and learning;
- Staff recruitment and retention;
- Governor/staff training and professional development;
- Partnerships with parents/carers and communities;
- Visits and visitors.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy are what make a difference.

Each year we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall School Improvement Plan, setting out the specific actions and projects we shall undertake.

## **24. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

People affected by the Policy will be consulted and involved in the review. We involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated annually by the School Leadership Team and reported to the governing body Children and Families Committee.

We ensure that the commitments embodied in our aims and values for equality permeate the full range of our policies and practices:

