Defford and Besford Church of England
Primary School

"Through Faith, Friendship and Fun we Learn and Grow"

Equality Policy

Ratified by Governing Body : November 2025
Review date : November 2026

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1.Introduction

This Equality Policy replaces previous School Equality policies including:

- Race Equality Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Equal Opportunities Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out Defford-cum-Besford CE First School's commitment to equality and inclusion, and to set out how Defford-cum-Besford intends to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

2.Mission statement

At Defford-cum-Besford CE First School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and age (for staff only). We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
We aim to develop and maintain a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected with the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life. The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, sex, age and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination through our positive approach to equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that our diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3.School Context

In the context of Defford-cum-Besford CE First School we feel the most appropriate definition of equality is-

'Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, with each individual respected for who they are'.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community. The responsibility for keeping the issue of equal opportunity at a high level of priority at all times and in all areas, is that of the Headteacher, SENDCo and Governors. The school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice and seeks to monitor its success through our rigorous process of self-evaluation.

4. Teaching and learning

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School aims to provide all pupils with opportunities to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;

- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps, including providing targeted support where appropriate;
- Take account of the achievements of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community which do not stereotype but which do expose pupils to a range of thoughts and ideas;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and also to celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social
- stereotypes, expectations and their impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches which are inclusive of our diverse range
- of pupils;
- Seek to involve the community around the school in celebrating and raising awareness of cultural diversity.

5.Admissions and exclusions

Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate with reference to the Protected Characteristics or socio-economic factors.
Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any disproportionality is identified and dealt with.

6.Equality of Opportunity for Staff

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in our employment practice and advance equality across all groups within our workforce. Aspects of Equality (age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity and religion and belief) are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions do not unlawfully discriminate against any person.
Actions we will take to ensure that this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Providing continued professional development opportunities for all staff, which are monitored as part of the performance management process;
- Provision of Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

7.Equality and the law

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will ensure it does not unlawfully discriminate against its pupils, prospective pupils, staff, job applicants, or parents / carers in the performance of its duties or in applying its policies and practices.
Unlawful Discrimination involves treating someone less (or more) favourably than a "comparator". Harassment (which is a form of discrimination) means violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Victimisation involves treating a person less favourably because of a previous complaint. We recognise that discrimination can occur in the following ways and will actively work to alleviate it;

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability including failure to make reasonable
- adjustments and provide auxiliary aids and services.
- Harassment
- Victimisation

8.Accessibility

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will comply with the Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and will ensure that our school is as physically accessible as possible to pupils who have a disability. To ensure wider accessibility we will:

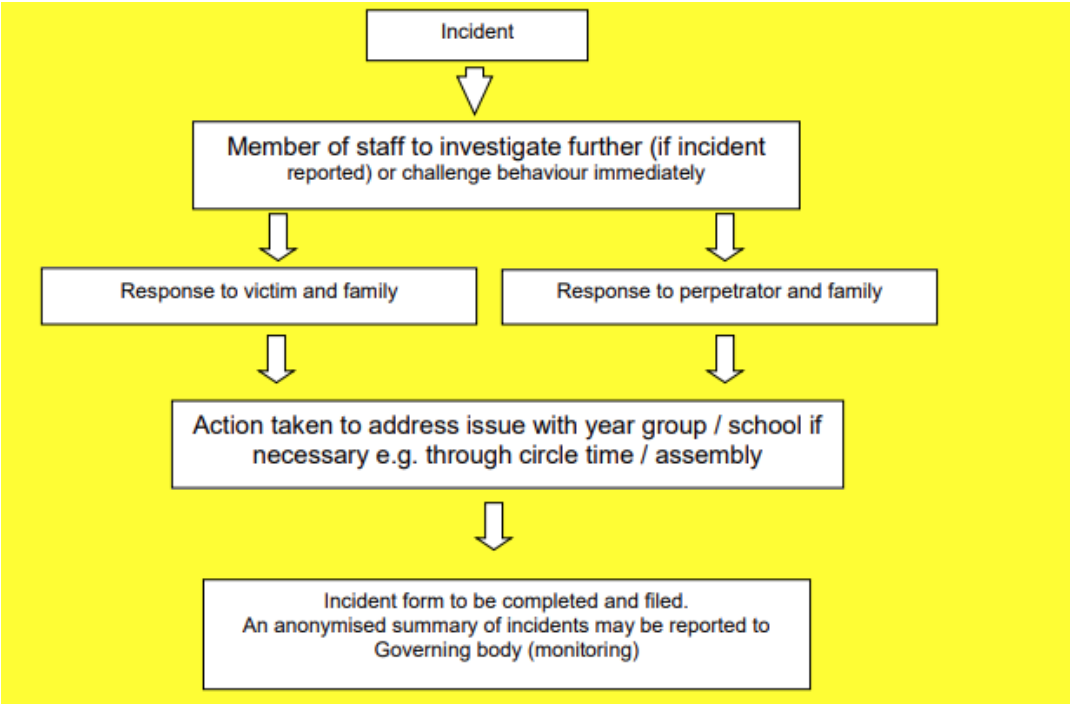
- Increase the extent to which pupils who have a disability can access the school curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils who have a disability can access education and associated services;
- Improve access for pupils who have a disability to written information which the school provides. This will be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of the views expressed by pupils and their parents / carers about their preferred means of communication.

We will review our accessibility targets at least every three years. The targets can be found in our Accessibility Audit plan. We will work actively to anticipate the needs of staff and pupils who have a disability and will ensure their inclusion by making reasonable adjustments. When considering whether a request for a reasonable adjustment can be met we will consider the following factors:

- How effective the change will be in assisting the disabled person
- Its practicality
- The cost
- The resources and size of school
- The availability of any financial support
- Any safety issues

9.Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.



10.The general and public sector equality duties

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single equality duty for all public bodies, including schools. This Duty replaced previous Equality Duties and applies in respect of all Protected Characteristics–age, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief. The Equality Duty has three aims. It states that the school will, in the discharge of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

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

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will tackle discrimination by:

- recording and reporting all racist incidents and prejudice related bullying incidents
- working with pupils and families to address concerns should they arise.

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School is committed to advancing equality of opportunity by:

- removing or minimising disadvantage
- taking steps to meet the needs of pupils, parents / carers and staff
- encouraging participation in any activity in which participation of protected groups is disproportionately low.

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will foster good relations by:

- tackling prejudice and harassment including bullying, and promoting understanding between pupils from different backgrounds.

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will ensure that a clear procedure is in place to enable all pupils and staff to report any incidents which are of concern. All staff will be expected to consider

dealing with such incidents as a vital aspect of well-being for the whole school. All incidents will be fully recorded and reported to a member of the SLT.
In addition to the general Equality Duty schools are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which was introduced by subsequent Equality Regulations. The PSED sets out requirements for public bodies (including schools) to set and publish equality objectives and publish information which will demonstrate how the school is complying with the aims of the Equality Duty and meeting the objectives it has set.

In order to comply with the requirements of the PSED we will:

Collect and publish school equality information annually - Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will undertake routine equality monitoring of our pupils by race, gender, age and disability across a number of areas including admissions, exclusions, progress and attainment.
Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will also undertake routine equality monitoring of our staff.
We will collect the following workforce information;

- The number of part-time / full-time staff and analysis of race, gender, disability, and age distribution
- Gender pay gap information
- Grievances and dismissals

Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will report school equality information annually as part of the Head Teachers report to governors.

Undertake engagement activity with protected groups annually - Defford-cum-Besford CE First School will undertake engagement activity annually with protected groups to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new and the review of existing policies.
Engagement activity will include:

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- School councils
- Parents meetings

Identify and publish school equality and accessibility objectives - Defford-cum-Besford will develop specific and measurable equality and accessibility objectives based on the evidence gathered and the engagement in which we have been involved. Objectives will meet the three aims of the general Equality duty.
The equality and accessibility objectives will be reviewed every 3 years.
Every three years we will draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and self-evaluation process; this will set out the specific equality and accessibility objectives we will pursue.
We will report annually on progress towards achieving them in the summer term Head teachers report to Governors.

11.Roles and responsibilities

The role of governors

The governing board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive and meets the needs of both pupils and prospective pupils.
The governing board seeks to ensure that no-one seeking employment at the school will be subject to any kind of unlawful discrimination. It will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment is accessible to adults and children who have disabilities. It will strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
The governing board will ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of any of the protected characteristics and ensures that all reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils.
The governing board is liable for any breaches of Equality legislation. It is also liable for the actions of its employees and agents of the school, unless it can show that it took all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation taking place.

The role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible, with the support of the governing board, for the implementation of the school's Equality Policy.
The Head Teacher will ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy and their responsibilities within it, and that teaching and non-teaching staff are given appropriate training and support to apply this Policy fairly in all situations.
The Head Teacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this Policy, so that no-one is discriminated against in respect of employment or training opportunities.
The Head Teacher will promote Equality principles and standards when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
The Head Teacher will consider all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, as matters of grave concern

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

All staff will ensure that all pupils and members of staff are treated fairly, equally and with respect and will promote and maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy.
All staff will strive to provide curriculum material which includes positive images and challenges stereotypical images and assumptions.
All staff will challenge any incidents of bullying, prejudice, racism or homophobia, and will record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head Teacher.
Teachers will support the work of ancillary or support staff and support and encourage positive intervention in respect of any discriminatory incidents.
Staff are personally responsible for acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation which they carry out during their employment.

12.Annex A: Protected characteristics

The protected characteristics for the school's provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Age and marriage and civil partnership are NOT protected characteristics for the school's provisions but do apply to staff.

Disability

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

In relation to physical impairment:

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see below).
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act.

Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are:

- The length the effect of the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term. 'Long term' means that an impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a disabled person.
- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time-consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.
- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day-to-day activities' at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a

wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glasses or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

For example:
Someone who has ADHD might be considered to have a disability even if their medication controls their condition so well that they rarely experience any symptoms, if without the medication the ADHD would have long-term adverse effects.
Progressive conditions and those with fluctuating or recurring effects are included, such as depression, provided they meet the test of having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.
This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for school pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.
A person will be protected because of gender reassignment where they:

- make their intention known to someone – it does not matter who this is, whether it is someone at school or at home or someone like a doctor:
- ▪ once they have proposed to undergo gender reassignment they are protected, even if they take no further steps or they decide to stop later on
- ▪ they do not have to have reached an irrevocable decision that they will undergo gender reassignment, but as soon as there is a manifestation of this intention they are protected
- start or continue to dress, behave or live (full-time or part-time) according to the gender they identify with as a person
- undergo treatment related to gender reassignment, such as surgery or hormone therapy, or
- have received gender recognition under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

It does not matter which of these applies to a person for them to be protected because of the characteristic of gender reassignment.
This guidance uses the term 'transsexual person' to refer to someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Pregnancy and maternity

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is covered in Section 2.

Race

Race means a person's:

- colour, and/or
- nationality (including citizenship), and/or
- ethnic or national origin

and a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethic or national origins.

A person has the protected characteristic of race if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'.
Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

Religion or belief

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.
A religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as a religion. It must, though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs.
Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.
'Religious belief' goes beyond beliefs about and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion.
A belief which is not a religious belief may be a philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism.
A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.
For a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:
It must be genuinely held.

- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment.
- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society.
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Sex

A person's sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

- Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men)
- Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people)
- Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people)
- Some people experience little to no sexual attraction (asexual people)

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian, asexual or heterosexual.
Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestations of that sexual orientation.