



GROVE HOUSE CHILDREN'S CENTRE  
Head of Centre: Himisha Patel

## Equality Policy

Reviewed: June 2016  
Next review: Summer 2020

**Approved by the Governing Body at their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**Signed: .....Chair of Governors**

# Equality Plan

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## **1. Mission statement**

At Grove House Children's Centre, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all children, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the centre, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the centre feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in centre life.

The achievement of children will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support children, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Grove House Children's Centre, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan; the centre operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our children with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use pupil progress data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of children;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all children and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the centre, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;

- Provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staff room discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole centre population, which are inclusive and reflective of our children.

### **Admissions and exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the centre's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **3. Equal Opportunities for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Grove House Children's Centre.

We are 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. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the centre reflects the diversity of our community.

#### **Employer duties**

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **4. Equality and the law**

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010).

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.'

The protected characteristics are:

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

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to children, and so the centre is free to arrange children in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to public bodies, centre including both LA maintained and Academies. The centre must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

### **4a. Race Equality**

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

### **4b. Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the centre's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Legal duties**

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on school, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;

- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

#### **4c. Gender Equality**

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on centres to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male children and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

#### **4d. Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For centres this means admissions, benefits and services for children and treatment of children.

#### **4e. Community cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between children from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

### **5. Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, children and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-centre forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET;
- Whole centre surveys on children's attitudes to self and centre;

- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at governing body meetings.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of governors**

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the centre is fully inclusive to children, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our centre on grounds of the protected characteristics.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the centre environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make centre communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and children.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the centre, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our centre on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief.

### **The role of the headteacher/principal (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)**

- It is the headteacher's role to implement the centre's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of centre life.
- The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

### **The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching**

- All staff will ensure that all children are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the centre's Equality Policy and objectives.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

## **7. Tackling discrimination**

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the centre environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

**Direct discrimination** occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

**Harassment** is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person"

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a prohibited act") in connection with the Act. E.g. making an allegation of discrimination.

### **Types of discriminatory incident**

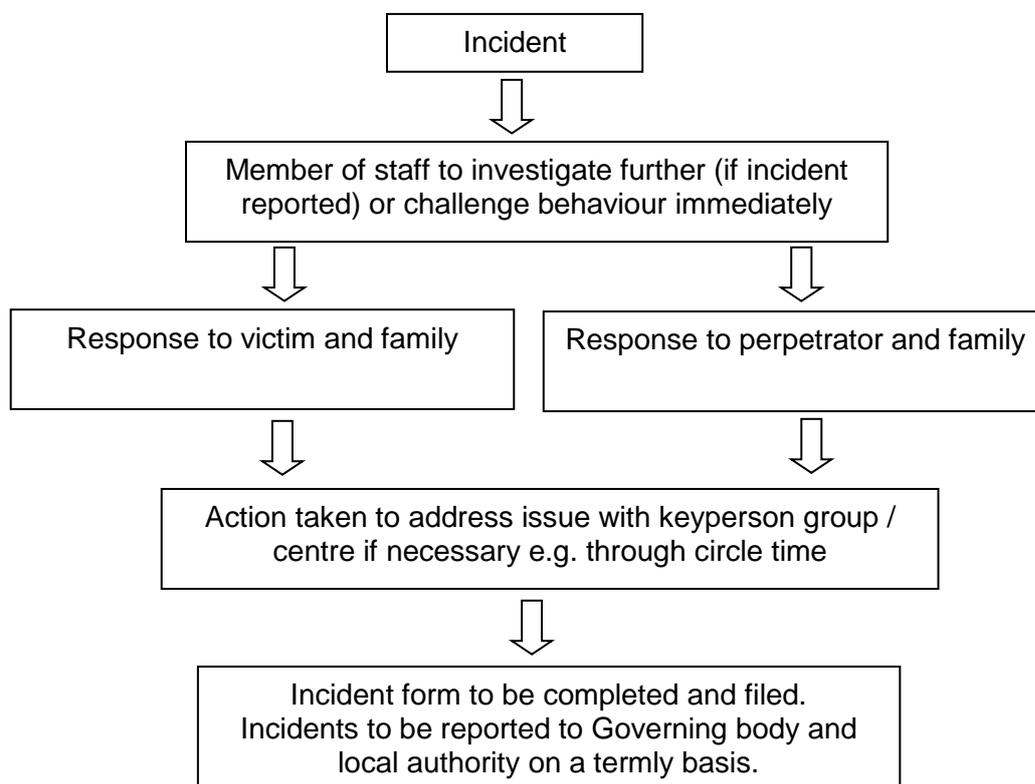
Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into centre;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Deliberate exclusion of someone by speaking in a language (other than English) which they cannot understand.

## Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to children 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 centre.

The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



## 8. Review of progress and impact

Our Governing Body has agreed the objectives. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our centre policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality objectives annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a four-year cycle.

We make regular assessments of children' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of children are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

## 9. Publishing the objectives and demonstrating compliance

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to prepare and publish objectives, we will;

- Publish our information and objectives on the centre website;
- Raise awareness of the objectives through the centre newsletter, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available.

The centre has until the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 to publish their initial information and first set of objectives. After this the information that demonstrates how the centre is complying will need to be published at least annually, and information on objectives at least every four years.

Publication of information in future years should include evidence of the progress made against the objectives set. The information released does not simply have to be statistical data but can for example include minutes from governing body meetings that demonstrates progress.

## **Appendix A**

### **Examples of further actions you may want to include in your action plan to meet the general duties**

#### **ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION**

##### **The centre will ensure that:**

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- All staff are aware of the centre's Equality Plan;
- The talents of disabled children are recognised and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the centre population in terms of race and gender;
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all children are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the centre e.g. through involvement in the Centre Council by election or co-option); class assemblies; fund raising etc;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies;
- Extended centre activities such as breakfast and after-centre clubs take into account pupil needs and access issues and children attending reflect the diversity of the centre population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status;
- Staff, children, parents and carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Plan through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, centre council meetings, parents evenings etc.

##### **The centre will provide:**

- Extra and additional support for children who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well being, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have their needs accommodated; that children with hearing impairment have appropriate support;
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the centre (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent, where possible; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the centre to support wheelchair users).

#### **PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND MEETING NEEDS**

##### **The centre will:**

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the centre and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the centre and support them in their work and career development, and try to reflect the diversity of the centre community in its workforce;

- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the governing body and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute;
- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different centres and communities;
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for children, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups;
- Supporting disabled children in the period of transition between primary and secondary centre to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings;
- Helping children and young people to understand others and value diversity;
- Promoting shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them;

## **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

### **The centre will:**

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives;
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity;
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis;
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour.

## **MONITORING IMPACT**

- The centre will collect and analyse evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement;
- The governing body will report annually to parents on the effectiveness and success of its Equality Plan. We will place the report alongside the plan on our website.