

Public bodies such as schools have a duty under the 2010 Equality Act to ensure they promote equality within their organisations and this statement sets out how we endeavour to achieve this at **John Hampden Primary School and Tetsworth Primary School** and includes areas we have improved on over the past school year. We consider this to be not just a legal duty but a moral one as well. A belief in the right of every single person to be treated with equal dignity and compassion alongside equal legal protection is fundamental to the ethos which underpins everything we do in our schools.

The Equality Act 2010 makes explicit our responsibility to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected 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.

In this respect, a protected characteristic could be any one of a multitude of factors that are shared by particular groups of people, but will include characteristics such as race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. Central to a commitment to fulfil this responsibility is a recognition that all groups with protected characteristics fall within the compass of the human race as a whole, and who by definition therefore have equal status and equal rights.

At John Hampden and Tetsworth Schools, our core values are caring, aspiration and resilience. We will always treat everyone fairly; celebrating and meeting different needs so that all members of our school community are free to live, learn and achieve their potential.

We also seek to recognise that the way in which we treat people is linked to the way we interact with our wider community. We do not consider compassion and consideration to be finite resources, and the equal treatment of people can and should serve as an exemplar of our commitment to, and responsibility for, our school community, our wider community and the wider world. As schools, we are in the privileged position of supporting equality in our current practices, whilst also helping children to develop and embed the principles of equality and responsibility that will best promote this in the longer term.

Principles into practice:

The following examples cover some of the main ways in which we seek to implement our moral and legal responsibilities to ensure equality within our schools. This is by no means exhaustive though. Because we have a duty towards the children in our

care as well as to our employees, some measures may be relevant to each of these groups to a greater or lesser extent. However, there is a crossover between many of the elements, and although they are numbered for ease of reference, the order is not an indication of the degree of importance, and they should not be seen as discrete units. We believe that equal opportunities is an unquestionable principle, and these elements taken together are the basis on which we seek to demonstrate and promote the principle.

1. Whenever the Board **reviews policies and practices** in the school, we also take into account any relevant equal opportunity implications. Where relevant, the details of equal opportunity considerations will be specifically identified. The schools' key policies are kept on our websites and all are available for review by request to our school offices.
2. We regularly **analyse the progress and attainment of all children** in the schools, including the progress and attainment of specific pupil groups. Where we identify significant variations between the children who share a protected characteristic and children in the school generally, we then explore the reasons behind this. It is important to ensure that children in particular groups are not being inadvertently disadvantaged, but it is equally important not to assume that the discrepancy is necessarily a consequence of a particular characteristic. This means that our schools look at children individually, and examine why the discrepancy is showing up, so that we are best placed to support children in the way that is most appropriate for them. We also recognise that each child is an individual, composed of a multitude of characteristics, and their inclusion in one or more protected characteristic groups should not be seen to define them without reference to everything else that goes to make the whole child.
3. Alongside performance data, we also **analyse attendance, behaviour and exclusion data** to ensure that we identify patterns in children with protected characteristics. In this way we can target support to prevent issues growing or developing, allowing all children to benefit from the opportunities of our schools.
4. All aspects of **our curriculums are open to all children**, and we make adaptations where necessary to accommodate the particular needs of a child or group of children.
5. **We model the British values of respect and tolerance to all people**, irrespective of characteristics, and we consider it our moral duty to promote and develop this understanding and good practice in the children themselves. When a child demonstrates intolerance or disrespect with regard to the characteristics of another person, we will work with that child to strengthen their understanding of why their behaviour or language has not been appropriate in line with our teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education.
6. We ensure **pupils engage effectively in their learning**, so that different strategies are used to meet the differing needs of pupils in lessons, including

those children with a special educational need or disability or a protected characteristic. This might involve external and internal training, consultancy support from the OXSIT team and support so that all staff can adapt lessons so that all children can learn well.

7. We **promote a culture in which children feel comfortable sharing concerns and worries with adults in school**. Although worries can affect all children, those in protected characteristic groups can face greater barriers than their peers do. Three principles are at the heart of our approach to supporting children with their concerns:

- Firstly, a recognition that what might seem like a small issue to an adult can feel hugely important to a child, so that we listen to the root of a child's anxiety rather than what might be its surface manifestation. An example of this might be a child who complains that no-one will play with him or her and understanding that what the child is probably feeling is not so much the denial of the game, but more a sense that other children may not want to play with them.
- Secondly, we encourage children to develop the language and understanding of complex emotions, so that they are better able to articulate what they are feeling. If a child can't explain what it is that is distressing them, they are less likely to seek help. Children in certain protected characteristic groups may need greater levels of support in developing these skills.
- Thirdly, we place great emphasis on the development of strong relationships between all adults and children in the school, based on mutual trust and respect. Consequently, when a child feels vulnerable or worried, they are able to choose from a number of adults that they know well, the person they feel most comfortable approaching.

8. We also seek to **promote a culture in the school that recognises the needs of staff members**, whether this is in terms of emotional support, time off to attend family events or medical appointments, or requests for changes in working arrangements. Because the individual needs of staff members can sometimes be directly linked to their membership of a protected characteristic group, we see our duty to be compassionate employers to be particularly relevant in supporting members of staff in this respect

9. We also promote a culture in which **parents feel comfortable to approach the school with concerns or difficulties**, which again can sometimes be linked to their membership of a protected characteristic group. In addition to increasing parents' confidence in approaching the school with issues that may relate to protected characteristics, the strong relationships between staff and parents has helped to develop a culture where the strengths and needs of protected characteristic groups are understood, acknowledged and valued.

10. The school **recognises world festivals and dates** that are important for a range of protected characteristic groups which regularly feature as part of our

school activities. This supports our planning for key events in school, as well as raising our awareness of moments in the year that are important for children, staff and families across a wide range of protected characteristic groups.

11. Our Pay Committee considers the **protected characteristics when deciding on the pay awards** following the Executive Headteacher's recommendations. This process aims to ensure the pay award is not skewed by age, race, religion or any of the protected characteristics.

Agreed by the FGB on 15.07.2024

Signed:
Chair of Governor

Date:

To be published on both school websites.