

Roecliffe CE Primary School Public Sector Equality Duty Statement

- **What is the Public Sector Equality Duty?**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into effect in April 2011 as a result of the [Equality Act 2010](#). It requires public bodies to promote equality and replaces three pre-existing duties relating to disability, race and gender equality.

The PSED applies to all maintained and independent schools, including academies, and maintained and non-maintained special schools.

- **Protected Characteristics**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published [non-statutory advice](#) that sets out schools' obligations under the PSED.

Paragraph 5.1 explains that the PSED extends to the following **protected characteristics**:

Race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment

- **Three Main Elements**

Paragraph 5.1 of the document explains that the PSED has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- **Due Regard**

Paragraph 5.4 of the DfE's advice says that '**due regard**' has been defined in case law and means giving "relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty".

For schools, this means:

- Decision makers must be aware of the duty to have due regard when making a decision or taking an action and must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Schools should consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep them under review on a continuing basis
- The PSED has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the analysis necessary to comply with the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind

- **Specific Duties**

The PSED introduces secondary legislation in the form of **specific duties**. The duties require schools to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic
- Prepare and publish equality objectives
- Schools are required to update this published information **at least annually** and to publish objectives at least **once every four years**.

- **What does our school do to eliminate discrimination?**

We have set a clear vision and values which expect all our staff to act in a non-discriminating manner and be mindful to avoid actions that will be deemed as such to the public and our wider community.

We have **up-to-date and ratified policies** that set out a clear message that discrimination is not tolerated: behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding and child protection.

We understand that it is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability and one of our **equalities objectives** addresses this.

The governing body and school leaders involved in recruitment will **avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment** including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Another one of our **equalities objectives** addresses this.

Through a **structured PSHE curriculum offer, Collective Worship, workshops and visits**, equalities will be discussed with and taught to the children, exemplifying the **British Values** and **school values** that we believe in.

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of the school community. All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the school's various policies relating to equality.

We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

Prejudice is not tolerated and we are continuously working to promote an accepting and respectful environment for our school community.

Objectives

Our equality objectives are based on the principles of human rights and human dignity, and can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure that the school retains a culture of advancing equality both in its policies and its practices
- To develop the children's understanding of, and commitment to, the promotion of equality and the elimination of discriminatory practices and beliefs
- To deepen an understanding among all children and staff of the strengths and needs of all protected characteristic groups
- To continue to seek ways in which the culture, policies and practices within school can be further improved to advance equality and to eliminate discrimination
- To celebrate the rich variety of individual and group characteristics which constitute our school community, as well as the wider world.

Principles into Practice

The following list covers some of the main ways in which we seek to implement our moral and legal responsibilities to ensure equality within school. This is by no means an exhaustive list. 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 of course a crossover between many of these elements, and although they are numbered for ease of reference, the order in which they are listed should not be seen as being in terms of degree of importance, and nor should each element be seen as a discrete unit. 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 this principle.

1. Whenever the governing body reviews policies in school, we always take into account any relevant equal opportunity implications. Where relevant, the details of equal opportunity considerations will be specifically identified. The school's key policies are kept updated on our website, and all our policies are available by request at the school office.

2. We regularly analyse the progress and attainment of all children in the school, 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 we 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. All aspects of the curriculum are open to all children, and we will always make adaptations where necessary to accommodate the particular needs of a child or group of children.

4. 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 the academic curriculum, we believe that education is by far the most effective response to incidents of intolerance or disrespect.

5. 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 do not find them appealing enough to play with.

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.

6. 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.

7. 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. Positive and effective relationships between staff and parents helps to develop a culture where the strengths and needs of protected characteristic groups are understood, acknowledged and valued.

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

Latest review: January 2024

Next review: January 2025