

The Bourne Partnership



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-24

Signed	Date March 2024
Headteacher	
Signed	Date for Review March 2025
Full Governing Board	

1. Introduction

Hadlow and Shipbourne Primary Schools (The Bourne Partnership) are committed to being inclusive schools, where all feel safe and valued. Our Strategic aims and core values reflect the environment in which our students study safely and with dignity. Our staff work effectively to foster and develop an atmosphere of respect and understanding where discrimination is not tolerated.

Our responsibility to promote equality of opportunity for students and staff is fundamental to the core values we foster: Our intention at all times is to be:

- Inclusive and welcoming
- Professional and efficient
- Honest and reliable
- Open and transparent
- Supportive and caring
- Responsible and accountable

Each individual is encouraged to reach their full potential through the development of their skills and knowledge based on their unique contribution and individuality regardless of age, disability, gender including gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy.

1. Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 brings together under one single piece of legislation, previously published single equality legislation, in particular:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 (DDA)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act 2006
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The aim is to make the law more consistent, clearer and easier to follow in order to make society fairer.

The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and in some cases extends the previous equality legislation.

The Bourne Partnership has a legal duty to comply with the Equality Duties stipulated in the Equality Act 2010, of which there are three:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination; including harassment, victimisation and other inappropriate behaviours.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity.
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2. Purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy brings together in a single equality and diversity policy document all aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is to describe how the equality duties of the Equality Act 2010 will be met by The Bourne Partnership and replaces any previously published policies in this area.

In addition to our commitment to meet the legal obligations, The Bourne Partnership recognises that the culture and core values of the partnership must reflect the diverse needs of all stakeholders and that each individual has a responsibility to work towards achieving this now and in the future.

Our common goal is to be an inclusive partnership where all feel safe and valued.

3. Meeting the Equality Duties

The Equality Act 2010 states the individual characteristics which are protected by law. The three Equality Duties apply to the following Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Race
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy, Maternity and Parental leave
- Religion or Belief

Note: The Socio-economic background of an individual is not one of the Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. From an educational stance, the social and educational background is relevant when guiding and supporting learners through their education. When students are from an area of high deprivation, they and their families may have poor prior educational attainment and low expectations which may impact negatively on the success of the individual if they are not identified and supported appropriately.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines the focus of its equality work at The Bourne Partnership. This is grouped under the three Equality Duties and are:

- 1) The promotion of equality of opportunity for all.
- 2) The elimination of unlawful discrimination for students, staff and other stakeholders across the whole range of policies, practices, plans and procedures.
- 3) The fostering of good relations and promotion of positive attitudes between and towards those with a particular characteristic and those without through training materials and resources for staff, students and other stakeholders.

In addition, the following activities will help achieve the equality duties. These include:

- Ensuring the accessibility to materials, facilities, products, services and resources for all students, staff and stakeholders, including the impact of school and partnership policies on individuals or groups.
- Ensuring the diversity of students is positively recognised and supported through embedding differentiation and equality of opportunity into teaching and learning and curriculum planning, reducing the differences in outcomes of learners.
- Developing a staff development programme in order to raise awareness of equality and diversity and how everyone can contribute to achieving the equality duties.
- Ensuring that the diversity of staff is positively recognised and supported and that equality and diversity is embedded into the staff recruitment and promotion procedures enabling all to participate and benefit.
- Developing student resources and materials which promote and celebrate differences and diversity in order to raise awareness and increase tolerance towards each other.
- Encouraging student engagement through participation in and contribution to school activities.

4. Protected and non-protected characteristics covered by this policy

Within the overall equality objectives there are priorities which are specific to the different Protected Characteristics.

- **We have a zero tolerance attitude towards bullying, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and any other inappropriate behaviours based on any of the Protected Characteristics (all are treated equally).**

Age

People of all ages are protected, though for people under the age of 18 years, the Children's Act applies. People sharing the same age group share the same protected characteristic.

Gender

Men and women are both protected. An example is equality in the work place which prohibits less favourable treatment between men and women in terms of pay and conditions of employment.

- We will break down stereotypical ideas of male and female jobs, careers, educational and professional pathways.
- We will actively promote and encourage staff and students into industries and jobs stereotypically associated with the opposite sex.

Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (usually more than 12 months) adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to

day activities. A person does not have to disclose a disability therefore we should take the lead and always ask if there are any needs that require accommodating. It is unlawful to ask about a job candidate's health before offering them work.

- We will focus within teaching and learning on differentiation and positively promoting disability within society.

Race

In the Equality Act 2010, "Race" refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality including citizenship and ethnic or national origins. Physical attributes can be classed as race, though culture which may be linked to a particular nationality is not protected for example, language, which may define the race but is not classed as "Race".

- We will raise awareness with staff and students of different ethnic groups and nationalities in order to break down barriers to learning, improve tolerance and acceptance between all, foster good relations between different groups and eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment through improved understanding and awareness of ethnic differences.
- We will create an inclusive environment where students and staff feel valued and safe.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment refers to a person who has proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex. The person is protected by the Equality Act regardless of whether they are undergoing medical supervision. Gender reassignment does not apply to transvestites.

- See Gender bullet points
- Ensure facilities and services are accessible in an unobtrusive and respectful manner.

Sexual Orientation

This refers to a person's sexual orientation towards a person of the same sex, opposite sex or either sex.

- We will create an inclusive environment where everyone feels safe, included and supported regardless of their sexual orientation.

Marriage or Civil Partnership

The Equality Act protects employees who are in a civil partnership or married though only in relation to unlawful discrimination.

Pregnancy, Maternity and Parental Leave

A girl or woman is protected on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, which reflects the period of a woman's ordinary maternity leave entitlement in the employment context. Parental leave refers to either parent taking shared parental leave.

- Our policies make due consideration of pregnancy, maternity and parental leave.
- Risk Assessments are carried out and reasonable measures are put in place to ensure equality of opportunity.

Religion or Belief

For a religion to be protected under the Equality Act, it must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief, on the other hand must be an important and significant aspect of human life and behaviour. Sustainability is an important element of belief, for example, Green belief. If belief is worthy of respect in a democratic society it too is protected, such as Political belief.

- We will create an inclusive environment where students and staff are shown respect for their different religions and beliefs.

Socio-economic background

Although this is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it is important to recognise that students and staff can be victims of discrimination, inequality of opportunity and poor social inclusion due to their actual or perceived social and economic background.

In some cases, students from a poor socio-economic background are disadvantaged initially due to poor social skills or underdeveloped educational knowledge and skills. The Bourne Partnership is committed to reducing the achievement gap and providing all with an equal opportunity to succeed.

5. Reporting Processes and Procedures

All incidences of discrimination, victimisation, bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviours based on Protected Characteristics will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to the Full Governing Body as part of the Head of School's report.

Racist incidents will be recorded in a separate book and reported to the Governing Board.

Bullying incidents will be reported separately – see Behaviour Policy.

Incidents perpetrated by students will be dealt with using the following procedure:

- a. Report individual to the Head of School or member of the Senior Leadership Team where they will explain the reasons behind the school's policy for zero tolerance
- b. The Head of School or member of the Senior Leadership Team will investigate the incident and will record and monitor conversations
- c. Any incident of racist abuse, no matter what form, will result in the child being placed in the Racial Incidents book and parents being contacted.
- d. Pupils who are recorded in the Racial incidents book on more than one occasion may be subject to a fixed term exclusion and ultimately a permanent exclusion if this unacceptable behaviour does not stop.
- e. In the case of a very young child making racist remarks, a discussion will take place with the child and parent. It is for the Headteacher to decide on the innocence of the remark.

Incidents perpetrated by staff or other adults will be regarded as disciplinary offences and will be reported to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the incident involves the Headteacher. If the response is considered unsatisfactory, the Complaints and/or Grievance policies apply.