

# Polesden Lacey Infant School



## Equality Policy

Status	Non-Statutory
Review Cycle	3 yearly
Date written/last review	June 2024
Date of next review	June 2027

Signed Headteacher

Date

**Equality Policy**

## Introduction

Polesden Lacey Infant School is a positive, supportive, and caring environment, in which we are committed to make everyone be valued and secure. Our school is at the heart of our local community, and we aim for all children to have an awareness of the world which encourages respect for everyone's needs, beliefs and cultures.

We are committed to promoting equality across the schools. We will tackle enthusiastically any situations that will lead to unequal outcomes. We will strive to ensure equality of access and that the diversity within our school community is celebrated and valued. We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school, and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth, irrespective of their:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage or civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race,
- religion or belief,
- sex, or
- sexual orientation

as laid out in the Single Equalities Act 2010. From this point onwards, these are referred to as "Protected Characteristics".

### **The School Context**

- Polesden Lacey Infant School is a one form entry Infant School, situated in Bookham.
- The school was in the lowest 20% of all school for the number of pupils (currently 84). Being a small school supports us in knowing all of our pupils and their families very well, enabling teachers to pinpoint how to engage each pupil with their learning and what the next steps are of individuals
- The proportion of pupils eligible for FSM and ever 6 remains low. Currently 11% and this puts the school in the lowest 20% of all schools for the proportion of FSM. Although the school's location is in quintile 4 (more deprived) of all schools the pupil base in in quantile 1 (least deprived) of all schools in terms of deprivation. There is currently one looked after children in the school with plans in place for the pupil to be adopted.
- There was nothing significant to report for the English as an Additional Language group – It should be noted that 10 children speak another language as their first language. This is celebrated through pupils sharing their language with their peers and other classes and celebrating culture whenever possible.
- The school was in the top 20% of all schools for the proportion of girls (56.2%) There was a larger than average increase in the percentage of girls between 2017 and 2018 than most primary schools nationally.
- The school has 4 out of 17 possible ethnic groups. The largest ethnic groups are white, British (80%), White; AOWB (9%), Mixed; white and Asian (6%), This academic year we also have 1

pupil who is Any Other Mixed Background and 1 pupil who is Any other Asian background. Due to the predominance of White British and Any Other White Background pupils we know that we need to expose pupils to the multicultural nature of Great Britain. We have made inclusion a part of our SDP for the academic year 2020 – 2021 to support us in focusing on ensuring all pupils feel welcomed and included at our school and to develop respect and understanding of others' cultures, religions, languages and ethnicities.

- We have a strong ethos of being an Eco School, Forest School and Fairtrade supporting school. Many of our parents tell us that this is part of the reason that they elect to send their children to Polesden Lacey Infant School

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the **Public Sector Equality Duty** and to plan and work towards fulfilling **two specific duties**:

Firstly, The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”: requires all public organizations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Secondly, “specific duties”:

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations.

Appendix 2 shows the school's Equality Objectives for 2021 - 2022

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with the Equality Act and also provides guidance to staff and visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

**Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:**

- 1. All pupils and staff at Polesden Lacey Infant School are treated with equity,** independent of their Protected Characteristics. As a school we also ensure that no child is disadvantaged in their learning due to their socio-economic background.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and see diversity as a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages, which people may face in relation to the Protected Characteristics. We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, and visit our school.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and foster mutual respect between different groups and communities.

4. **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel that they belong within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
5. **We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including recruitment and promotion and continuing professional development.
6. **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils will be able to make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. **We work to raise standards for all pupils, including the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils helps to raise standards and increase enjoyment of learning across the whole school.

### **What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions;
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum, and by creating an environment which fosters respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.
- The way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils, and to stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers. We ensure we provide access to benefit, facility or service to all pupils.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure, and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school.

### **Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance**

The school Policy on Behaviour - Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions takes full account of the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality relating to the protected characteristics.

We keep a written record of different race-related incidents and provide a report to the governors, where appropriate, about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

### **What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups**

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and to identify targets to achieve improvements.  
Some of the data we collect is:
  - ❖ on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
  - ❖ on the % of pupils identified as having an additional educational need and/or disability, and by their principal need or disability;
  - ❖ by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
  - ❖ On inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings. (See SEND policy for more information)

### **What we are doing to advance equality in the classroom**

- We use a range of teaching strategies to ensure that we meet the needs of all pupils
- We provide support to pupils at risk of under-achieving
- We are alert to and actively combat the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender and disability.
- We avoid language which runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupil's achievement or which seeks to define their potential as learners, such as 'less able'. We actively promote a Growth Mind Set attitude and talk about 'Stretching our brains'.

In addition to avoiding or minimising any possible negative impact of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise their positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

### **What we are doing to foster good relations**

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum which promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

- We teach about difference and diversity and about the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and throughout the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources, which reflect the diversity of the school, the local community and the wider population in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values which challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

### **Other ways in which we address equality issues**

We maintain records of all training. We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Review relevant feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evenings, parent-school forum and/or focus meetings, or governors' open sessions with parents
- Collate and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the Whole School Circle Time, PSHE lessons and whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on SEN Support Plans/Healthcare plans, PEPs and support
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at governing body meetings.

### **Publishing Equality Objectives**

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for different groups. We produce Equality Data Analyses which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

### **The Role of the Governing body**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The governing body group keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors review the Equality Policy every three years and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

### **Head teacher and school team**

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, and are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example by providing materials which give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and additional educational needs.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of their induction. We go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year. Staff attendance is recorded.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equalities and to comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information to enable them to do this.

### **Equal Opportunities for staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and to 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 strive to eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and to actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and we comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Disseminating the policy**

This Equality Policy, along with the Equality Objectives and data, is available

- on the school website
- as part of induction for new staff



## **APPENDIX 1 – Polesden Lacey Infant School Check list for school staff and governors**

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender regarding pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training. This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
  - All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies, clubs and the school circle time
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes appropriate action
  - Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community
- Diversity is promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions, class assemblies and whole school events, through minority ethnic, disabled, male and female role models and those from vulnerable groups
- The school environment is accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment
- The Governing Body is representative of the community it serves. Procedures for the election of parent governors are accessible to all
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and which promote positive images of people
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences

## Appendix 2

### Polesden Lacey Infant School - Compliance with the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED)

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which applies to public sector bodies including maintained schools and academies. The Act introduces the concept of 'protected characteristics' which are given protection under the Act – race, disability, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

This combined equality duty came into effect on April 2011 and replaces the Gender, Disability and Race Equality Duties.

#### **Aims of the PSED Act (General Duties for schools)**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

For schools this means:

- Decision makers in schools 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. Schools will 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 rigorously.
- Schools cannot delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else.

The specific duties required of schools:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- To prepare and publish equality objectives.

#### **How Polesden Lacey Infant School Complies with the Equalities Act 2010**

- **Elimination of discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act.**

The vision statement for our school clearly states that our philosophy is to provide a happy, stimulating and secure community for every child to develop a sense of independence, a love of learning and respect for others and the World around them. This is reinforced in part of our Mission Statements which clearly

states: We will ensure our school is a friendly, vibrant and inclusive community, where everyone has a voice and actively celebrate diversity

We do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. We hold an Anti-bullying week every year and we aim to ensure that children can recognise what bullying is and know what to do if they see or experience it. All concerns about bullying are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. All incidents in or out of class are recorded.

We actively tackle discrimination against those protected characteristics identified in the PSED and promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst all. We strive to promote the individuality of all our pupils, for example through celebrating differing achievements. We are committed to ensuring that positive action is taken to redress the balance of inequality, which may exist.

The following policies support the school's compliance:

- Behaviour
- Teaching and Learning
- Anti-bullying
- Accessibility Plan

As a school, we take positive action to challenge and prevent racism, and to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society. The school takes action to provide equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. Any racist behaviour is challenged and reported.

- **Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**

The ASP online summary report for 2019 (data for the school provided by the Department for Education) which compares the schools' data with national data shows:

- Overall attainment of pupils in KS1 are above national standards both in all schools nationally and in similar schools in reading, writing and maths and significantly above for Reading.
- Girls, Non Free School Meals, First Language English all attained above the national average.

Actions to address the differences in performance by children form the basis of our School Development Plan; a summary of this is available from the school office.

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are non-discriminative in employment and promotion. We apply objective criteria and recruitment procedures to ensure that we employ the best-suited candidate to the post. We welcome applications from all and are aware that we have a predominately white female staff.

- **Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**
- Polesden Lacey promotes different values throughout the school by means of the curriculum, assemblies based on appropriate themes to support our values e.g. respect, courage and fairness.
- PSHE curriculum focuses relationships, friendship etc.
- RE curriculum which emphasizes understanding other religions and cultures

## **Our Equalities Objectives 2024 – 2027**

- To further, enhance diversity in the curriculum.
- To narrow attainment gaps between different groups across all subjects, specifically
- To increase inclusion in provision
- Improved access to the Physical environment

The school will review these objectives every three years.

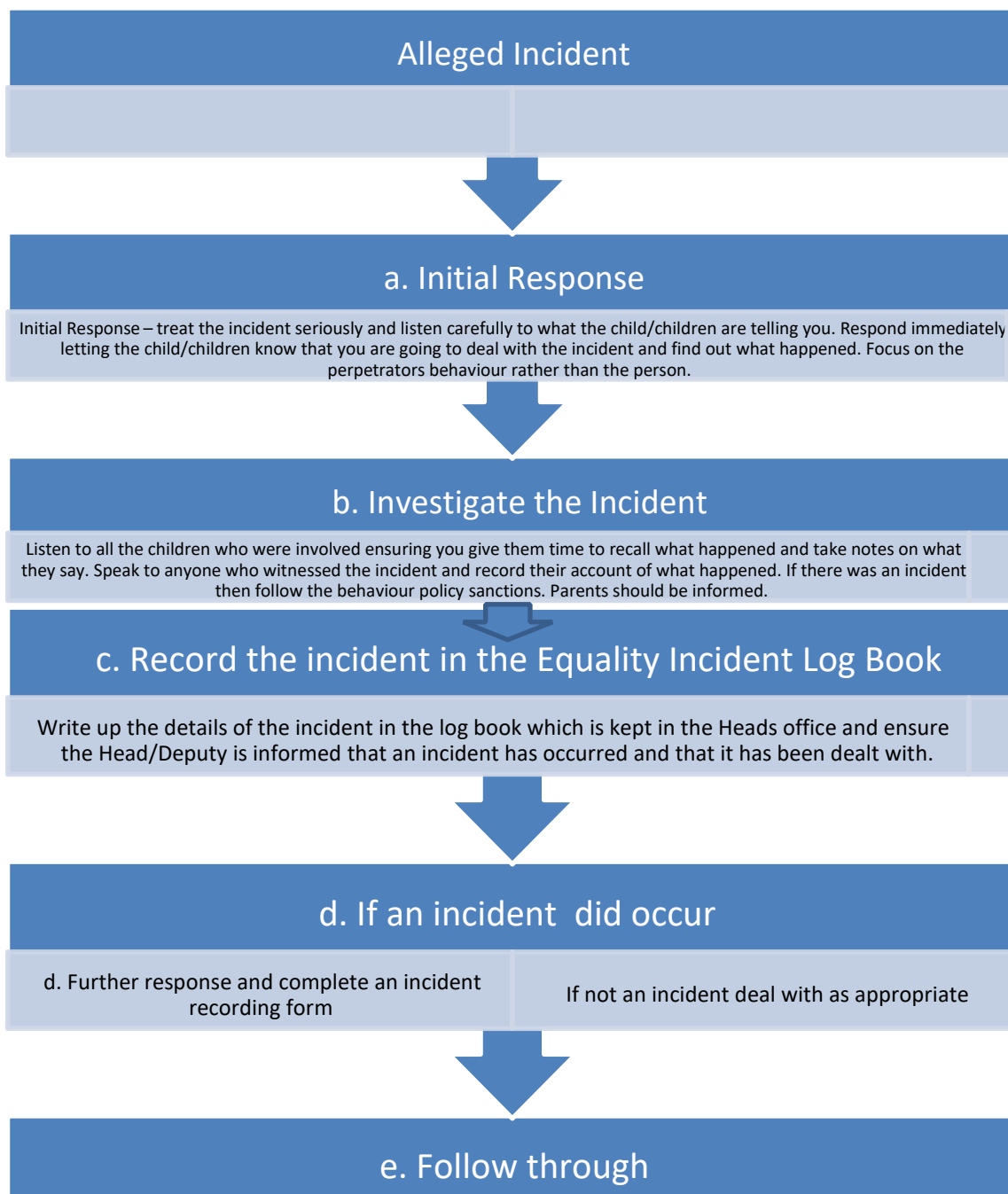
Statement written November 2024

To be reviewed November 2027

## **Appendix 3**

### **Procedure for Reporting Incidents**

It is very important that we log, investigate and report on the number and type of incidents which occur of a discriminatory nature against pupils because of their race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion or belief which occur at our school. Once it is clear that an incident has occurred it is essential that it is dealt with immediately and that the details are recorded accurately directly after the incident so that they can be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken. Staff should refer to the flowchart below when an incident occurs. Incidents can be raised by any member of the school community and if the alleged incident involves a member of staff the disciplinary policy and procedures would be instigated.



**Polesden Lacey Infant School Incident Recording Form**

Date of Incident:

Name of pupils involved: (Please include year group and class teacher name)

Name of person reporting the incident:

If the incident is of a racist nature, then record the ethnic origin of the child who was the perpetrator and the victim of the incident.

Incident Details:

Witnesses:

Action Taken by school:

Parent/Carers of all children involved informed:

Reported by:

Please ensure the form is signed clearly and your name is recorded and the form is dated.