



This policy was adopted in: **December 2012**

The next review of this policy is due in: **July 2019**

The name of the designated person is: **Mark Tuffney**

The nominated Governor for Equalities: **Jenifer Ball**

### **Lowther School Charter**

Lowther Primary School is a positive, supportive and caring environment, in which everyone feels valued and secure.

Our School is a dynamic place, full of fun and passion for all aspects of learning, where everyone is inspired to work their hardest to achieve high standards and fulfil their potential.

We are at the heart of our local community and have an awareness of the world that encourages respect for everyone's needs, beliefs and cultures.

In this way Lowther Primary School strives to develop happy, healthy, confident individuals, who are well motivated, with the skills and knowledge to make their unique contribution to the world.

### **INTRODUCTION**

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement in different groups.

### **Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles**

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference, and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences, and strive to remove barriers



and disadvantages which people may face in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith. We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

- 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.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex, gender, race, disability, religion or belief.

(Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions relating to pupils.)

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”:

requires all public organisations, including schools to

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

“Specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools, to publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the



Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also available through our school development plan, the school prospectus, school website and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies, as well as in minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways in which we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

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

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, 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.
- 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.
- 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 their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief.

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

The school Policy on Behaviour - Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions - takes full account of the new duties under 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:

- prejudice around disability and special educational needs
- prejudice around race, religion or belief (for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, prejudice against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum)
- other prejudices, including homophobia

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.



We keep a record of 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.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils, and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps (for example for learners making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills).

We collect and analyse data:

- 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.

### **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'.

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 citizenship, 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 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 school council, 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 Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at governing body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

### Publishing Objectives *(see PPG Report, Accessibility Plan and School Development Plan)*

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

We evaluate our success by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for different groups. We produce 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.



### *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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee 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 annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

### *Headteacher and school team*

The Headteacher 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 which 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 is available

- on the school website
- as paper copies in the school office, on request
- as part of induction for new staff



### APPENDIX ONE

#### 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 and the school council
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies
- The school takes part in annual events (such as Black History Month) to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender
- 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 open to candidates and voters who are disabled
- 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 that promote positive images of people





- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors and whole school events.